Encounter

January 1977 80p

H. J. Eysenck

The Case of Cyril Burt

Fraud? Error? Witch-Hunt?

Andrew Shonfield

Can Capitalism Survive till 1999?

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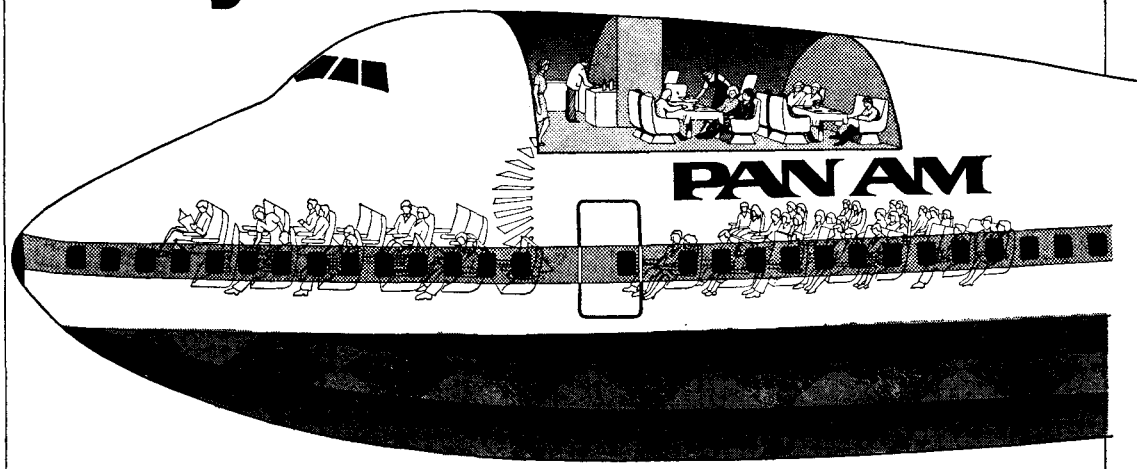

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Gillian Tindall

Incident at Delphi

HENRY'S WIFE WAS GREEK: that was the first thing that anyone mentioning him said. An unremarkable man in himself, employed in one of those professions (accountancy? insurance?) about which no one ever asks interested questions, it was almost as if he had lighted on a Greek wife to add an important dash of colour to an otherwise monochrome self-portrait. Not, however, that anyone would have suspected him of doing anything of the sort deliberately: he was far too honest, too unpretentious, too consistently himself to resort to such a cheap trick. Indeed his integrity, a dull thing to mention and a difficult one to portray, was in practice his great glory, an invisible yet shining aura that drew acquaintances toward him readily and bound friends to him for ever. Which, his friends occasionally agreed between themselves, made it all the odder that he had married Livia.

Livia was Greek: that was the first thing everybody knew about her. The fact also became, to Henry's most loyal associates, a kind of refuge, a means of avoiding more stringent comment or analysis. "What's Henry's wife like?" "Oh, she's Greek, you know." "Oh, I see." Being men of simple tastes at heart, married to dull, decent girls with reddened hands and greying hair, they were prepared to accept Greek as a quite other species, another version of humanity, to whom one's own standards, for good and ill, simply could not be applied. They were pragmatic men, without self-conceit. Their own wives did not tint their hair dark red and wear it low on their necks in a coiled bun. They did not wear expensively simple dresses in suède or woven silk, they did not cook lamb on a spit or mix yoghurt with garlic: they did not speak foreign languages. Nor did they argue with their husbands in public. Being reasonable men, they therefore concluded for the most part that Greek wives were something on which they themselves were entirely unequipped to have views, and in general their own wives concurred with them in this tacit assumption. It was only the occasional wife who, very late at night, after one of Livia and Henry's little parties, would remark to her husband with sudden tartness as she pulled on her girlish nylon nightdress that really she thought Livia was a bit much some times. (Perhaps Livia had been holding forth to the docile company on the essential importance of cotton nightwear, on the awful vulgarity of English chain-store taste, or perhaps she had just refused, as usual, to provide white Nescafé for those to whom her cups of syrupy black Greek coffee were for ever unpalatable.) And the husband in question would say, "Well, she wouldn't suit me, but then I daresay I wouldn't suit her either", or simply "Well, she makes old Henry happy, it seems", and climb into bed with alacrity to demonstrate his own lack of interest in the subject. None of them wanted to feel disloyal, or priggishly disapproving—and anyway Livia was so exactly the sort of woman other wives *would* feel jealous of. Or so, in their decent married innocence, they believed.

As for Henry himself, he had lived for the many years of his marriage in the bemused state of being unable to imagine either how Livia had come to choose him in the first place *or* how his life would have been had he married someone ordinary. Where would have been its savour, its colour—its pain? Reviewing his happy, humdrum childhood and youth before the Livia-era, it seemed to him that he had not been truly living then—that he could not have been, without Livia to

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point out to him, and occasionally to demonstrate, the violence and suppressed suffering concealed beneath the surface of things. Only very occasionally, alone and exhausted under the shower late at night (Livia thought bathtubs a dirty Western European invention), did it cross his mind, like a shadow, that he might possibly be comparable with the low-powered, suburban youth who becomes addicted to a malignant drug because it adds an intensity and spurious glamour to an otherwise purposeless existence.

But that was preposterous: he was a man in his forties, successful in his profession, respected and admired, loved even. The shadow would pass like a bad dream, and he would thankfully regain the bedroom, where, on their hard, Greek-style bed, Livia's hair and nightgown would be aureoled by the spotlight as she sat propped on one graceful elbow, reading Cavafy, or some French *nouvel roman* which (being no linguist) he was incapable of even discussing with her.

Even more rarely did he reflect that if he had married someone other than Livia—a generalised someone whom he always imagined as being like his mother, with thick hips and red goose-flesh on her neck—he might have had children or, at the least, some domestic animals. He was fond of both, himself, though without much experience to enable him to discriminate between them. But Livia had a Levantine contempt for domestic animals and considered the British in general and Henry in particular repellently sentimental on the subject. And as for children—why the subject had never really been seriously disputed between them. He had known when he married Livia that she was far too highly strung to bear children easily, and had seen too much suffering—so she said—to wish to bring children into this world anyway. And if, in the early years when the future still stretched before him as empty and inviting as a sunlit land, he had optimistically assumed that, with time, Livia's opposition to childbearing would change and mellow—well, he had learnt otherwise now.

Livia simply did not change: that was one of the remarkable things about her. Other people's wives might grow old, fat, wrinkled, take to fancy cults or drink or hormonal depressions, but Livia remained eternally the same: slim, vigorous, demanding, and remorselessly self-aware. She seemed, indeed, to have an odd relationship with time altogether—or rather, a lack of relationship: Henry had come to understand over the years that the passing of time was simply not real to her in the way it was to other people. The anguishes, grievances, and slights of years ago, as well as the joys and hopes, went on existing for Livia in a kind of perpetual present of the psyche, ready at any moment to surge forward and overwhelm today. Livia did not get over things. She did not—and this, Henry reflected humbly, was just as well—get tired of things either.

IT MUST NOT BE THOUGHT, however (though some of his friends were inclined to think it in their rare cynical moments), that Henry gave way to Livia at every point. He let her have everything her way in the home, of course, but then the house was all Livia had through which to express her considerable personality; it was reasonable that she should have the furniture, the décor, the music, the food, the timetable of their lives, all to her taste. For he, after all, had another world to go to, about which Livia showed no curiosity or desire to control: being Greek, she had a very clear-cut idea of what was a man's sphere and what a woman's. The gaucheness, the frigidity, the pathos, the hideous Anglo-Saxon folly of the Women's Liberation Movement was a favourite subject of hers. So Henry had his work, his own quiet, prestigious sphere, another world on which Livia did not impinge at all. Hearing tales of other men's wives who constantly phoned them at the office, or expected them to do all the week's grocery shopping on Saturday mornings, he counted himself lucky, in this and in other ways too.

Their home life was uncompromisingly Greek. Livia took a siesta every afternoon and therefore never wanted to go to bed till very late at night: indeed, they did not usually have their evening meal till 10 or later. Fortunately Henry had always been able to manage on rather little sleep. Their diet at home had a puristic Hellenic quality uncontaminated by such additives as puddings and pies: all through the year Livia rigorously grilled chops over charcoal, mixed tomato salads with goat cheese and oil, produced

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delicious but slightly scanty dishes of pickled fish, stuffed vine leaves or taramasalata. (Hummus, which Henry rather liked and found comfortably filling, she scorned as a debased middle-eastern dish, eaten by Cypriots but no part of true Grecian cuisine.) She often told Henry how fortunate he was to be eating this simple, healthy, *good* diet rather than stuffing himself on turgid British stodge as he had done when she had first met him. She was undoubtedly right, in principle, he thought, even if her theory took no account of the considerable difference in climate between London and Athens. But what he never told her was that, since he himself found yoghurt and honey, however delicious, unsufficiently sustaining for breakfast during the week, it had been his regular practice for years to call at a small workman's café on his way from the tube to his office and have a fried egg sandwich. She would have been appalled and furious at the very idea, as well as deeply hurt.

In such ways, without fuss or obvious assertion, did Henry maintain his independence. So that when friends, mellow with ouzo and retsina, declared that Livia and Henry's flat in Bayswater was "a little bit of Greece" and that it was as good as a trip abroad to visit them, he felt able to participate wholeheartedly in their pleasure himself. He was dimly aware that beyond their Grecian home there should have been something other than the interminable moist, traffic-clogged suburbs of the Home Counties. There should have been beaches and mountains within easy reach, open roads, high bright skies, all that stark beauty to compensate for the simple, rather comfortless, domestic style. But, not being an imaginative man, he was only dimly and theoretically aware of this. For Henry himself knew Greece only through Livia. He had never actually been there.

Most of their friends—or, rather, their acquaintances, for they had few close friends as a couple—assumed they went there every year or so. A childless couple with a good income—what could be nicer than Greece for a holiday? But of course for Livia herself it wouldn't be a holiday. For, as he had tried to explain to one or two of his own intimates, Livia, though "Greek forever" in her own phrase, had extremely painful memories associated with Greece. The result was that she had not set foot in Greece since she was sixteen years old, over thirty years earlier.

This amazing fact she chose to keep mainly secret. Indeed on the subject of her own past, its events and its time scale, she was as vague and ambiguous as the Delphic oracle. Even Henry was not entirely clear about the details of her family's flight from Greece after the end of the Second World War. Had it been, as she usually let it be understood, the Germans who had shot her father and brother, or had it (as in another version) been the Communists in '47, murdering as they retreated after their unsuccessful uprising? And why if, as Livia had once or twice angrily insisted, her family had been passionately opposed to the Germans, had they found it necessary to leave Athens after the German defeat? At all events, some tortuous and blood-smeared rationale had led Livia and her mother to two squalid years in the late 1940s in a displaced persons' camp near Trieste, in Yugoslavia ("full of dreadful Slavs, and Albanians and people who *said* they were Italian"). There, or later—the account was again unclear—her mother died, and Livia travelled, improbably, via Paris to Bournemouth, where she worked as a Mother's Help on a temporary permit and conceived a lively distaste for the traditional British way of life—and perhaps then also for children. She would certainly have left England again, she always said, had it not been for Henry. Henry had never quite decided if, on balance, she regarded her meeting with him and marriage as a piece of unlooked-for good fortune (which, for a stateless person, it was) or as a regrettable curtailment of further freedom, which would only be borne with fortitude. Perhaps Livia had never quite decided herself.

IN THE EARLY YEARS of their marriage, in the 1950s, holidays abroad had not yet become the accepted thing in Henry's circle, and in any case, with the unsettled state of the world, Livia's paranoid fear that if she went abroad she might not be allowed back into England seemed real enough. Later, as this obsession receded and air fares came down in price, she did consent to go abroad, cloaked in the decent anonymity of her husband's passport, in the way most of their acquaintances did: package trips to Majorca or

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Rimini, ski-ing holidays in small places in Switzerland or Austria. For some reason Livia's contempt for convention in England did not extend to English-style excursions to the Continent, and she was surprisingly docile and tolerant on these routine occasions; even her emphatic Hellenism temporarily went into abeyance. But they never went to Greece. For long years she maintained she didn't want to. Then, in the mid-1960s, when package tours there began to be advertised, they talked about it inconclusively and she had agreed to go—"Though of course you realise, Henry, that it will be no holiday for *me*." But then came the Colonels, and Livia, more Greek than ever and welcoming at their London flat a trickle of new refugees, declared that, like Melina Mercouri, she would never set foot in the land of her birth till the fascist régime was overthrown. The result was, that when the Colonels were unseated abruptly in 1974, Livia behaved as if this had been the one thing all along keeping her out of her homeland and began to plan a visit there in earnest at the first opportunity.

HENRY WAS BOTH ELATED and worried by the prospect. With some part of his mind he perceived that Livia's Greekness was acutely in need of a fresh transfusion of reality. In spite—or because—of her determination to preserve her national identity, that identity seemed in danger, as she grew imperceptibly older, of becoming a shrivelled, bloodless thing like a withered limb, more burden to her than use. But would a visit to the Greece of the present blend with Livia's memories, or would it conflict with them and destroy them? An awful lot of people seemed to be going to Greece these days. Over the years, in Spain and Italy, Henry had seen the debasing effects of prosperity and the cancer of tourism at work. He knew that once-empty beaches were now lined with hotels all round the Mediterranean, and that boys who had been born in fishing villages grew up to become waiters, souvenir sellers and beach-gigolos when their villages were transformed into an aquatic suburbia. The night before they left he had a frightening dream in which they had landed at Athens but it was Torremolinos. The people didn't speak Greek any more and didn't hear Livia even when she screamed at them. Livia went mad. He woke in a sweat, feeling old and exhausted, and dreading the days ahead.

But it all passed off far better than he had even hoped. They landed at Athens at dusk, and the next morning the Hertz car they had arranged to hire carried them quickly through its enormously expanded suburbs which Livia did not recognise and out to the safety of the new motor road towards the Corinthian isthmus. Henry was thankful to put Athens behind them for the moment; he had been afraid that Livia would at once insist on going in search of streets or buildings in which she had lived. He would have wanted to do that, he thought. But she didn't seem to care about this. As the days went by, and they trickled south into the uncluttered Peloponnese, through remote seaside villages blessedly unequipped for any more than a handful of visitors, it gradually dawned on him that Livia hadn't come to Greece after all to confront her own past but just for Greece itself. For once her peculiar imperceptiveness of the passage of time was an advantage to her; she did not analyse or make comparisons: it was enough for her to be in her own culture.

For it was, still, her culture, he now thankfully realised. As the amazingly tranquil days succeeded one another, he marvelled to see how simply she enjoyed everything. A cup of coffee in a café was a ritual; going shopping in village shops for picnic lunches, a form of joyful sacrament. For the first time, he understood fully that her insistence on eating Greek food in England all these years had not, after all, been an affectation or a form of pig-headedness but something of fundamental significance, like a Jew sticking to his dietary laws in a gentile world. He felt ashamed now of all the times when, temporarily exhausted by her demands, her anxieties, her arbitrary judgments and her craving for admiration, he had felt unsympathetic towards her. It had been as she had often said: he was a stuffy Britisher who did not understand temperament.

Now, as he lovingly watched her joking with waiters and shopkeepers, stopping to chat to crones sitting on front of doorsteps, he felt how right she had always been to stick to her own manner, her own style, even though at home it did seem unsuitably strident. He relaxed and began to enjoy himself also more than he had done for years. For the first time ever in their married life he felt

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that—well, that here he could trust Livia not to do anything silly which would annoy people. Not that it was really like that, he told himself hastily, but that was how, in drab self-conscious England, it sometimes seemed.

Then they crossed back to the mainland to go to Delphi.

IT HAD BEEN, he realised before the morning was out, a mistake. For the first time that holiday Livia found herself among a horde of foreign tourists and she didn't like it at all. She didn't like the new hotels in the village of Delphi either, or the shopkeepers on the pavements inviting her to buy reproduction statuary and mass-produced bags. She walked past them, head high, occasionally saying things to them in Greek that made them fall back with a slightly stunned look on their faces. By the time they actually reached the ruins, trailing in the hot sun behind a bevy of organised Germans, she was, Henry noted with the old sick dread, in a very bad temper indeed.

He wandered round the fallen temples without seeing them, his whole being concentrated, as so often before, on sustaining Livia through her current crisis, trying to placate her but prepared, if necessary, to draw her anger upon himself rather than let her turn it toward others. By the time they reached the huge amphitheatre, as familiar as a picture of the Royal family with their corgis, she seemed calmer, and all might yet have passed over, he thought afterwards, had it not been for the Germans.

They seemed a rather ill-assorted group: elderly women in linen hats and ankle socks, men in shorts carrying multiple cameras the results of which could not possibly have justified the weight and complexity of the apparatus, sun-scorched youngsters dressed in varying degrees of unsuitability for the climate and the place. Livia had already, during their trip, passed various remarks on the ineptitude of tourists who, despite their relative wealth, came to Greece less well equipped for hot sun and mountainous holy places than the poorest peasant. Now, in the amphitheatre, he saw her lip curl with dislike and contempt, as she surveyed sun-tops and peeling shoulders, tight jeans, wobbling wedge-heeled clogs, hair like dry steel wool. (She herself was, of course, dressed with impeccable suitability in soft blue cotton, flat sandals and a silk head scarf.) Henry didn't like Germans either, on the comfortable British principle that no one old enough to remember the War likes Germans, and he too wished they had not been there at that moment cluttering the amphitheatre. But why must Livia take their presence there so *personally*?

All might still have been well had it not been for the blonde German girl in the long red and blue flounced skirt: you couldn't miss her, partly because she was the most flamboyantly dressed in all that gaudily coloured troop, partly because she was, in a lacquered, trivial way, much the prettiest female there, and partly because she was showing off outrageously. She was jumping on and off one of the plinths that, two millennia before, had held statues of powerful and terrible deities, posing there with exaggerated gestures for other people to photograph her. Her giggles went on and on, carried by the marvellous acoustics right to where Henry and Livia sat: not intermittent laughter at this joke or that, but the continuous mindless mirth of adolescent sexual hysteria. She was one of those girls who made Henry feel glad after all that they had never had a daughter, and he muttered consolingly to Livia:

"I'd smack her bottom if she was mine and went on like that."

"Would you indeed?" said Livia in an even, unpleasant voice: "I expect she'd like that."

Henry realised it had been a mistake to say anything. It was, of course, quite natural (he supposed) that Livia should be automatically critical of any pretty woman younger than herself, but it was always difficult for him to remember that, in such circumstances, she was apt to believe the most casual and well-intentioned remark to be weighted with insulting meaning.

"She's only a kid", he said curtly. "She doesn't mean any harm. She's just stupid."

"And what makes you think that *not meaning any harm* or *just being stupid* is an excuse?" asked Livia, cruelly parodying his tolerant tone. "Most of the Nazis *didn't mean any harm* and were *just stupid* too. That's the trouble with you—you've no sensitivity or experience in these matters. And you're too lazy to think things through."

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"Oh, come on Livia.... A silly little tourist...."

"A silly little *German bitch.*" She spat the words out: "A bitch on heat. Here—in Delphi. Dirtying the most famous and holy place in the world. She is an obscenity."

"Well, we'll wait a few minutes and I expect they'll move off", said Henry uneasily. His soothing tone sounded priggishly inadequate in his own ears—he could never rise satisfactorily to such occasions, never match Livia's intensity of feeling. Evidently Livia thought so too, for she ground her small teeth together and cast him a look of contempt.

Perhaps it was the look that did it. Or perhaps—Henry was to reflect afterwards with a dawning self-knowledge—he himself was keyed up and elated by this visit to Delphi and actually found Livia's insane fury as hard to take in that setting as *she* found the German girl. At all events, he suddenly began getting very angry on his own account. Livia had better not push matters any further.

What Livia in fact did, was get up and walk, consciously graceful, down the slope of the amphitheatre, right to the bottom where the Germans were now preparing to move off. Full of foreboding, Henry followed her. The blonde giggler was subsiding at the foot of the plinth, hanging schoolgirlishly on to the shoulders of a fat, pink companion. Henry saw clearly, from a few paces behind, as Livia walked deliberately up to her, spat at her, and then made the Greek five-fingers-outstretched sign for warding off the evil eye.

The German girl shied away, looking faintly surprised, but her vacuous face showed no hint of understanding the force of Livia's actions. She and her companions did, however, moderate their shrieks to subdued titters and mutterings, and once they looked back towards Livia as the party moved off to other sites, other backcloths for photographs.

Henry caught up with Livia and grabbed her by the arm.

"Livia, what the hell did you do that for? Really you go too far—"

"*She* went too far—" replied Livia without looking at him. "Much too far." Her oracular, enigmatic tone enraged him further. Who the hell did she take herself for?

"She was just a visitor enjoying herself", he said, keeping his voice steady with difficulty. "Not in a way you or I would choose, of course—but in a way which, however silly, is essentially harmless. You've told me yourself that the Greeks honour guests to their country—and you spit at her. You also make that sign which, you told me the other day in great detail, must never be made by accident to anyone in Greece because it puts a curse on them. Pull yourself together, Livia."

"And just what", she said in a small cold voice, still gazing after the departing Germans, "do you imagine that you mean by that?"

"I mean", he shouted violently, the patience of that hour, that day, and all the years before it, suddenly at an end. "I mean stop behaving like a bloody, phony, self-centred, pretentious *cow.*"

In the brief anti-climax of silence that followed, she said:

"I have put a curse on her, you know. And on all of them."

"Bloody rubbish", said Henry violently. "It's all just showing off with you—all of it. You may fool other Greeks but you don't fool me. Be your age, Livia!"

It was by far the hardest thing he had ever said to her and, as they began to climb one behind the other down the steep, rocky hill, he knew already that he should never have said it; that it would prove unforgivable.

AT THE BOTTOM, the Germans had already been incarcerated again in a hot, mauve coach and were driven off. Livia sat in the shade and watched the coach's shiny rump disappear round the hairpin bends of the road. When she finally decided to speak to him again, Henry thought, and the storm broke from her, it would be a terrible one. Exhausted already by the events of the day and the mounting heat of the sun, he went to choose postcards at a kiosk.

He sat in the car to write them. "Having a really marvellous holiday", he wrote. "Delphi is really a fascinating place. Livia sends her love." He wrote it six times, to six different couples. Then he put the cards away in the glove compartment and started the engine. If Livia was going to sulk, then two could play at that game.

She waited till he had backed the car and turned it. Then she strolled over and got in

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without looking at him. Glancing sideways at her to make sure she had shut her door properly, he was surprised to find that her aquiline face wore a look of composed satisfaction. She couldn't really think she had won, could she?

They drove on into the mountains. There was a monastery somewhere up there whose frescoes they had earlier agreed they would see. Now, it was the last thing Henry felt he wanted to do; pictures secretly bored him anyway: but he felt still less able to discuss with Livia now any alternative plan.

It was a relief to give all his attention to the road, which wound up and up above sheer, unfenced drops. It was amazing, he had remarked several times already that holiday, that there weren't more terrible accidents, particularly considering the way some of the Greeks drove.

Suddenly Livia leaned forward and remarked "There they are." Her voice held the comfortable, unsurprised note of someone seeing reliable friends arrive at an appointed meeting-place.

Henry looked where she was pointing, down the face of the mountain, but knew already with a sudden horrible understanding what he would see. Too neat, too crude, too violent. Too like Livia herself. The warm, sunburnt skin of his neck and shoulders grew cold and crept.

Down, far down below, stranded on its side among scrub and boulders, a broken toy on a garden rockery, lay the mauve coach. Most of its windows seemed to be smashed and above it on the mountain, as if it had bounced over and over, lay suitcases, carrier bags, cameras, shoes, bits of clothing, huddled shapes, and what might have been the torn and crumpled remnant of a long, red and blue flounced skirt.

Livia drew the comfortable sigh of one completing a good meal, and then said companionably, "We'll be at Ossios Loukas quite soon, won't we? Have you got the map handy?"

And Henry drove automatically onwards, cold and appalled within himself, towards the future.

The Idea in History

A Saturday dawn, the rain
Seething in the street outside.
My furniture is dark.

First novels begin like this,
A youth waking to a world
Of objects that reflect him.

For Schopenhauer there was
Nothing until the first eye
Opened and mirrors began.

Those class barriers that stop
Us thinking followed later.
History became carpets, chairs.

Surfacing like a white fish,
A consciousness is forming.
It travels from college gardens

To snowcem estates, ideal
Under mountains that were wet,
Bare, until the builders came.

Tom Paulin

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Andrew Shonfield

Can Capitalism Survive till 1999?

PREDICTIONS of a sharp slow-down in the pace of world economic growth were freely made in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis. It became part of the conventional wisdom that we would have to satisfy ourselves with a good deal less in the future than we had come to expect in the heady years of relentlessly advancing affluence in the 1960s. And the worst slump since the 1930s served to reinforce the sense of diffused anxiety that we were somehow already up against the "limits of growth", which had been created by the resource doomsters. No matter that the slump—which was caused by the *under-use* of available resources—was the opposite of the predicted run-down caused by their over-use. It was the mood that mattered.

Among other things it helped to give a great boost to the sales of a work like Robert Heilbroner's *An Inquiry into the Human Prospect*—a windfall which Heilbroner engagingly acknowledges in the preface to his latest book.[1] It had, as he shows clearly, very little to do with his argument. He is emphatically not an instant doomster. He has an articulated view of the different stages of the future, not a linear progression towards disaster, which lifts his speculations above the familiar simplicities of much of this kind of futurology. Even if one is not wholly persuaded by his awful picture of the concluding stage, the process by which he gets there is a deeply challenging one. One feels challenged, if one does not concede, to produce alternatives. That is the purport of this essay.

HEILBRONER'S *Inquiry* started out from the proposition—which is hardly controvertible—that *at some stage* the current process of exponential growth in the use of raw materials and in pollution-engendering production will cease. He then asked what the political and social circumstances of the world were likely to be during and after the permanent stop. And he came up, perhaps not surprisingly, with an answer which is reminiscent most of all of Hobbes—life nasty, brutish; governments all-powerful in their relations with their citizens, arbitrary and violent in their behaviour, and having the character of being *sacred*. The last because (like Hobbes' monarch) the government will incarnate the collective will to survival in conditions where there is exceedingly little political room for manoeuvre—no substantial political alternatives in fact—so that any attempt to change the rulers by the promise of alleviations of the grinding social discipline would be likely to cost more in additional misery than any possible gain. Heilbroner opines that the cessation of economic growth and its hideous political accompaniment will occur sometime during the second half of the 21st century, or about a hundred years hence.[2] But the date is not crucial to his argument. His main point is that the society which will succeed our present industrial civilisation will not be a variant of its political and cultural ethos but its contrary, valuing many of the very things which we especially detest.

But whether human relations have to turn quite as ghastly as that, even on Heilbroner's assumptions about world trends, depends at least in part on how the Western nations conduct their affairs in the interval; and his latest book addresses itself specifically to this intervening period. He divides it into two parts—one covering the next decade or so up to the 1990s, and the other stretching from around the year 2000 into the first quarter of the 21st century.

It is these two nearer term scenarios that I

[1] *Business Civilization in Decline*. By ROBERT HEILBRONER, Marion Boyars, £3.95, paper £1.95; W. W. Norton, $6.95.

[2] See his "Second Thoughts on the Human Prospect", in *Challenge*, May/June 1975.

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want particularly to examine. I do so not merely out of speculative interest but because Heilbroner's projections have a close bearing on the contemporary debate on major options of policy. If, for example, he is right in his view that both privately-owned businesses and independent trade unions are unlikely to survive in Western society a couple of decades hence, then there is something to be said for preparing ourselves at an early stage to make the transition without wasting our energies in irrelevant quarrels. Heilbroner himself does not prescribe. The merit of his latest work (which I prefer to the more discursive text of *An Inquiry into the Human Prospect)* is that it sets out before us, with great clarity and remarkable succinctness, a collection of probabilities. They excite the imagination by the manner in which they are presented.

FIRST, on the immediate prospect for the next decade, Heilbroner does not reckon with any significant slow-down in the rate of growth. What he does foresee is a weakening of business initiatives, with more and more of the decisions about the production of goods and services arising out of the deliberate planning of governments rather than from businesses responding to the push-and-pull of the market. "'Business' in the planned state", says Heilbroner, using a bold simplifying metaphor,

> "is apt to become more and more the civil service of the nation-state, providing the indispensable but essentially passive support that is today rendered to the business community by the functions of government."

However this is still only a metaphor; its operational meaning needs to be more closely explored. Much depends on what *type* of civil service function is in question; it varies greatly from case to case.

The management of, say, Education or of the nation's Police does not normally involve a close day-to-day relationship with the political government of the country. There are broad guide-lines about the kind of schooling that is expected to be provided—and occasionally these are changed as a result of an overt political act, as in Britain currently—but, for the rest, the officials in charge of the educational process (and that includes headmasters of schools and university vice-chancellors) often have considerable room for manoeuvre in which to pursue ideas and proposals thrown up by the teaching profession, or by parents of school children, or by students. In the Police the considerations are of course different; but the watchword of professionalism is, if anything, even more regarded. It is a matter of principle in a number of democratic countries that the minister with responsibility for the police should *not* interfere with its daily activities; his task is to be the point of reference for spot decisions in an emergency, and for the rest to ensure that the limits on the discretionary power of the police are not abused.

Now compare such "civil servants" exercising a high degree of discretionary authority in the management of their respective spheres—and, therefore, possessing in practice a good deal of initiative in the development of day-to-day policies—with, say, the officials of the Inland Revenue service. It is evident that this part of the system of government depends on the strictest possible adherence by them to tightly-drawn rules overtly sanctioned by the minister. I suspect that it is to the latter type of "civil service" that Heilbroner's image of the future of business is envisaged as approximating. The former type is really very much like the situation of big business corporations as it already exists in several advanced industrial countries today.

I TRIED TO TRACE the development of this changing relationship between business and government in the Western world in a book which was published in the mid-1960s.[3] I concluded then that, in spite of differences in the ideologies and political assumptions of individual countries, there was a clear tendency in all of them to subordinate the traditional independent rights of private business to institutions designed to express the public interest. Government, in one form or another, was successfully asserting its right to exercise a large amount of influence over the long-term strategies of big business and to issue direct commands to it in moments of economic difficulty or political emergency. In this respect business is subject to the will of political government, like the schools and the police force; it can be made to respond to public policies.

And I would anticipate, with Heilbroner, that the assumptions of modern governments about the exercise of their power in their dealings with

[3] Andrew Shonfield, *Modern Capitalism: The Changing Balance of Public and Private Power* (Oxford University Press, 1965).

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the business community will, during the next decade or so, acquire new and clearer institutional forms. The capitalist countries of the West, including those with a strong private enterprise market ideology, have already come a long way since the mid-1960s in making this aspect of the changed relationship between Government and Business more explicit.

However, that is a very different thing from the complete subordination of business initiative to government orders. Heilbroner's picture of a reversal of the Marxist vision of the relationship between private enterprise and the state under 19th-century Capitalism is altogether too neat. In particular, it takes no account of the striking *reinvigoration* of certain market forces in the conditions of advanced affluent capitalism and the evidence of the *reduced* capacity of the state to command these forces.

THE MAIN POINT is that when very large numbers of people have a lot more discretionary income, as well as savings, than they need in order to maintain themselves at subsistence levels, they will not respond in the traditional way when the standard forms of economic pressure are applied to shape their behaviour. As events during the recent slump have shown, when a number of governments (other than our own) set about using all the incentives they could think of to get people to spend their way into a business recovery, they were unable to win their affluent but anxious citizens over to their policy. At other times, consumer preferences for particular forms of expenditure have been equally difficult to control. And these preferences elicit a ready response from the numerous entrepreneurs waiting to profit from any shift in demand. Finally, behind the entrepreneurs there is today a hyperactive money market, more sophisticated and ingenious than ever in ways of lending cash to those who believe that they have a profitable way of using it.

What has happened—at the same time as discretionary incomes have grown—is that vastly greater possibilities have opened up for *employing* money (by people who hope to make more of it), as well as for spending it. All this is a product of the revolution in cheap communication and transport which has made its effects fully felt only in the last ten to twenty years. Frontiers have been opened up, and the national economies of the advanced industrial countries today are like a collection of leaky sieves. Nor is it feasible for a single country's government to take action to remedy this situation—closing the holes and bunging the national economy tight—without offsetting losses of those advantages which large numbers of people in our societies have come especially to appreciate and to expect from foreign trade, tourism, and international transactions of all kinds. Governments know that it is dangerous to do things which annoy or provoke these newly affluent; they have too many ways of evading regulations which they don't like.

Moreover, Western governments have themselves found the vigorous and sophisticated contemporary markets highly convenient for some of their own purposes. As Professor Richard Cooper has pointed out in his analysis of the effects of the general increase in "economic mobility",[4] both inside the nation and in the international sphere, the effectiveness of a lot of government actions nowadays has come to depend on the sensitive responses of markets to small shifts in the balance of economic incentives or disincentives. This allows governments, if they are skilful, to run their policies on a light rein without being constantly seen to be engaged in tugging and hauling and heaving. The market pressures that are employed are often far more efficient in securing the desired results for public policy than the giving of direct commands to the citizenry. A comparison of, for example, the performance of Soviet and East European agriculture with that of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan in recent years readily shows this.

Of course, there are occasions—particularly sudden emergencies—when commands, backed by a powerful (and feared) system of policing, are a more efficacious means of achieving results. It is not uncommon for Western governments to be heard complaining, sometimes bitterly, about the unresponsiveness of their citizens to commands which, they aver, patently serve the national interest—as if it would be the most natural thing in the world for the operators in markets (whose profession it is to make fine calculations of shifts in supply and demand and to back them against competing calculations) suddenly to change their habits and stop trying to exercise their professional skills in buying and selling. Again and again there seems to have been surprise that an emergency like the collapse of a national currency cannot be dealt with in that way.

[4] *Economic Mobility and National Policy* (Stockholm, Wicksell Lectures, 1973).

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WHILE GOVERNMENTS HAVE FOUND themselves increasingly trammelled by the operation of these market forces, they have also been enabled in recent years, to a far greater extent than ever before, to use the expanded and fluid international market in money to obtain very large sums at short notice to support their currencies when their balances of payments have turned weak. The convenience of borrowing foreign exchange in this way has been immense, not only for nations like Britain and Italy—who have used the international capital market to avoid being subjected to conditions about the conduct of their national economic policies, which might well have been imposed by international organisations if these had been asked for a loan—but also for the more successful developing countries like Mexico and Brazil.

It is a most striking feature of the latest world-wide economic crisis that nations have felt able to take their time about the remedial actions which they have adopted to overcome a series of huge balance-of-payments deficits. Instead of a general panic rush for cover, with all the dangers of escalating trade restrictions, the deficit countries have been able to contemplate an extended and gradual return to equilibrium in their external accounts. It has been possible for them to opt for what the Americans call a "soft landing"—with incalculable consequences for the welfare of many millions of people in the Western world. It is not too much to say that the whole experiment with Incomes policies and Wage restraint—one of the most important social innovations of our epoch—could not have been embarked upon otherwise. Without the availability of large-scale international credits—and here official credits from organisations like the International Monetary Fund have contributed as well as the reinvigorated international capital market—many countries would have been driven in the recent slump, just as they were in 1931, into mass unemployment and severe restrictions on foreign trade in the effort to secure quick relief for their exposed currency reserves.

Currency reserves have never been as vulnerable to sudden attack—and to rapid extinction—as they are today. It was in the end the confidence in the *continuing* supply of funds from the market (rather than the once-and-for-all credits from the International Monetary Fund and kindred official institutions) which persuaded a number of West European nations, of whom the most important was Britain, that in spite of their weak finances they could afford to make the landing soft (or, at any rate, relatively soft).

HEILBRONER IS greatly impressed by the increased importance of a relatively small number of business firms in the economies of the advanced industrial countries. Rightly so. He points out that by the late 1960s in the United States the biggest 200 firms controlled as large a proportion of total business assets as the top 1,000 firms had done in 1941. A concentration of decision-making power of this kind provides the natural *milieu* for government planning in the contemporary Mixed Economy.

He is also much impressed, rightly again in my view, by the way in which an increasing number of decisions previously left to private initiative become matters of public policy. Governments are called upon to express the collective long-term interest in ensuring the safety of the products of new technology—allocating necessarily limited resources like land and certain medical resources, or simply making it possible to launch very big investment projects which (because of their scale or their riskiness, or both) would otherwise not be brought into production on time. There are many more such investments now than in the past. Their prevalence is the most obvious justification for national planning. We have become much more vulnerable to failures of economic timing. That is the result of the exceptionally close interdependence of the different parts of our industrial system and of the high pressure of consumer demand for all sorts of goods and services on tap. We are not prepared to wait, and many of the things that we want cannot be stocked.

All this does *not* mean, however, that government will take over the responsibility for the vast and intricate network of economic decisions, mostly of a short-term character, which determines what is produced and sold from day to day. Heilbroner is wrong in my view in seeing the further evolution of the Mixed Economy as being towards a situation in which governments prescribe and business simply obeys their behests. In his vision, a stranger to our society arriving here in the late 1980s or the 1990s and observing the behaviour of firms would be able to explain, indeed predict, it merely by knowing the wishes of government.

As I have indicated, this picture underestimates the continued vigour of unpredicted, and largely uncontrollable, market movements in the Western

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world. It does so because it allots an insufficient role to the small and medium businesses whose significance in the operation of the system is not to be measured by the reduced share of total business assets in their hands. These firms are not to be dismissed as "insignificant" satellites of the big corporations. They are also, in the aggregate, an important constraint on the big. It is true that they often depend on business orders from the latter; but they are also potential competitors whom the big ignore at their peril. Indeed, much of the strategy of the big firms is concerned with how to defend themselves against the constant threat of incursions in their markets by "outsiders." Newcomers do continue to arrive and to carve out a place for themselves in the face of the organised resistance of the established businesses.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE BUSINESS SCENE solely in terms of the relative size of *big* and *small* at different times serves to conceal important changes in the identity of the players.

Often the big firm holds on to its position only because it is ready to do a deal with a smaller, newer rival, and that usually involves some change in the ownership structure, *e.g.*, a merger with an exchange of shares between the two companies. The big well-established firm would certainly in such cases have preferred a less expensive solution—if it could have kept the challenger at bay by the force of its own competitive power. Mergers—which as Heilbroner points out are the chief cause of the increased business concentration in the USA—are also evidence of the pressures of competition at work. In such circumstances the big corporations, with their flanks constantly exposed to potential attackers who are frequently more nimble and speedy in action than the giants whom they challenge, would be very unwise to allow their actions to be determined by a blind obedience to the preferences of government. It helps indeed in predicting the structure of business in the future to know that if they were that unwise they would be unlikely to last very long. However well-established the individual corporation may be in its own product market, it is only very rarely that its position is so invulnerable that it can afford to act like an agency of public authority, that is to say, *as if* potential competition did not exist. The experience of the nationalised industries in Britain shows how costly a misjudgment can be even when the business concerned is owned by the government and endowed with a formal monopoly by it.

What follows is that the relationship between Government and Business has the symbiotic character of two bodies compelled ineluctably to live together and increasingly be dependent on one another, but whose aims and decisions from day to day do not (and will not in the future) by any means always coincide. Once this probability is conceded, the distribution of power within the industrial society of the future is profoundly changed from Heilbroner's picture. Pluralism is preserved, and forces making for the de-centralisation of a wide range of initiatives and responsibilities continue to operate. They will not necessarily be successful in all spheres, but they are likely to remain a potent presence.

IT IS TO BE OBSERVED that Governments also sometimes find it highly convenient to recognise formally the limits on their own omnicompetence, especially when they are dealing with the effects of the personal preferences of increasing numbers of affluent people on the behaviour of markets.

One of the tragedies of Communist Eastern Europe has been that the claims of government to be able to exercise control over every facet of economic life have been taken altogether too seriously. The rulers have by now become the victims of their own propaganda. It is no accident that some of the most important political battles in these countries during the past decade-and-a-half have been fought out round the issue of prices—specifically, about how far, and in what ways, Governments should interfere to make prices behave in a manner that visibly serves some simple view of the collective interest (like keeping down the cost of food and rents, rather than allow them to be used for the usual purpose of balancing the supply and demand for particular goods and services). The Hungarian "New Economic Mechanism"—which is, arguably, the most significant reform in Eastern Europe during the recent period—focused on this issue, with the government insisting on its own *abstention* from responsibility for certain types of price formation. In Poland, one government (that of Gomulka in 1970) has been toppled and another (Gierek's in 1976) has been seriously shaken in the process of trying to make prices once again perform their traditional function of bringing the

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available supply and the demand for staple goods into balance.

"No", said the rioters, in effect, on both occasions—and both times with the general popular support—"you have taught us that you, the Communist Government, unlike the governments of Capitalist countries, have assumed full responsibility for the form and content of *all* economic transactions. You have explained to us at length that it is the essential principle of the Revolution that all these things are capable of being controlled by a deliberate act of will, that those ineluctable market forces to which capitalist countries subject their peoples have been mastered by you—on our behalf. Well, then, manage the economy in such a way as to give us unchanging low prices for staple goods and services, which we all so much desire!"

Of course the Polish Government could not do this—could not, that is, while also giving to its citizens, or even trying to give them, the choices, the quick responses to the wishes of consumers, and the ready supply of stocks of goods in demand associated with the Market economy. How it must have envied, during the summer of 1976, the governments of the Mixed Economies of the West who have been able (at any rate, so far) to act on the principle that the determination of prices is a function which, most of the time, has to be *decentralised* and—except during wars and other national emergencies—remains the responsibility of bodies other than the government. For the rest, the Western government's task is confined to a watching brief: to ensure that none of these other bodies exploits a position of market dominance to the detriment of consumers. In consequence, the raising of the price of meat does not, in the West, bring with it the immediate threat of the forcible overthrow of government. The "Polish nightmare" has been exorcised.

IT SEEMS TO ME that Heilbroner greatly underestimates the lasting advantages of economic flexibility in the capitalist mixed system, which derives essentially from the decentralisation of power over the economy.

This indeed has been one of the major discoveries of the Social Democratic governments of Northern Europe, who have been so largely instrumental in engineering the advance of the welfare state during the most recent period. They have found that the business of looking after the welfare of the relatively rich people who elect them nowadays is very different from how it was pictured in the vision of the earlier socialists, even of the socialists of so late a vintage as the 1930s! With affluence, their constituents have become deeply attached to the benefits which they derive from business entrepreneurship responding to the play of market forces. Especially if the state is to perform effectively its widening range of social welfare functions, it must have the means (as the social democrats have concluded) of opting out of certain other economic responsibilities. They have also felt it to be important that this right of a Social Democratic government to "opt out" should be clearly recognised by its political supporters. Some parties have formally amended their political programmes, and even their constitutions, in this sense.[5] Others, like the British, have relied upon the news getting round among their followers that events (especially events attendant on being and trying to remain in office) require some modification of the old religion of omnicompetence. The dispute in Britain in the mid-1970s about what may be termed the Wedgwood Benn strand of socialism has to be seen in this context. What Benn, and an important faction of Labour Party militants who follow him, has in mind involves a return to the doctrines of economic omnicompetence. And that cuts right across the now established trend of West European Social Democracy.

MY ARGUMENT, IN SHORT, is that worker affluence has its own dynamic; and this, under conditions of majority rule, operates to limit the scope of the economic power exercised by the state.

The opposite view is that public goods and services will increasingly take precedence, that as it becomes clear that the most important things in our rich but vulnerable societies can be secured only by deliberate, collective endeavour, in which the old spirit of individual enterprise has no part to play, so the whole culture of the Industrial Market Economy will come to be felt to be irrelevant. The thesis of the growing incompatibility of late-20th-century culture with the sentiments of the next generation figures pro-

[5] It is worth recalling here Hugh Gaitskell's heroic but abortive attempt to get the Labour Party to remove the notorious Clause Four—promising a practically unlimited state take-over of all forms of production—from its Party statute.

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minently in Heilbroner's picture of the medium-term future. He is convinced that the ethos of the Capitalist Mixed Economy will be profoundly at variance with "the spirit of the coming age." The new generations will be repelled by its underlying assumptions, and it will therefore become progressively more difficult to make it work.

A similar conclusion is reached by Daniel Bell in his recent book, *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism.*[6] He forecasts "the rejection of bourgeois hedonism, with its utilitarian emphasis on economic appetite"—but with a more hopeful twist to his argument than Heilbroner, since he looks forward to "the retention of political liberalism" in the new situation. Both writers are convinced that, in spite of the growing amount of discretionary income which people have to spend and of the widening range of options in spending it, the satisfaction of personal wants is going to be downgraded. Both it and the market place (in which these wants are signalled and elicit responses) will progressively lose significance during the epoch ahead; and meanwhile the main arena for decisions about meeting people's requirements will be that of politics.

I do not find the arguments behind these forecasts, either in the benign Bell version or in the Heilbroner prognosis of increasing self-dissatisfaction, especially persuasive. I believe it is just as likely that the market, even though reduced in the share of total goods and services which it may be called upon to allocate, will be *more*, rather than less, appreciated. I also think that it is quite possible that in the more advanced and sophisticated social engineering of the future, market techniques may have a rather larger part to play in the distribution of "public goods."

Heilbroner lists a number of special institutional problems of the Capitalist Mixed Economy which he believes will be especially difficult to accommodate to the spirit of the closing years of the present century and the opening ones of the next. There is the encouragement to extreme individual acquisitiveness—when what is required is a much more powerful collective spirit. There are the extremes of privilege in the form of steadily growing accumulations of wealth—when what is required in order to secure the wage restraints (and the other elements of a social policy which would provide economic growth without intolerable inflation) is an economic system which visibly distributes its gains according to some readily acceptable principle of justice. Finally, economic planning in the public interest is placed under a compulsion to compromise with private property interests whose aims may be very different.

I HAVE ALREADY SAID something about the last point. There are, as I have tried to show, positive advantages in having productive property which is controlled and managed by bodies other than the state. It is *not* evident that long-range planning is better done without the input of information from independent economic agencies whose business it is to seek the best available rate of profit on the investment of their resources. At least the state is compelled to strike an overt bargain between these highly relevant considerations and its own views about the appropriate allocation of resources for the furtherance of its favoured social objectives. At any rate there is no indication that a "command economy" of the Soviet type is more efficient at making nice calculations about the relative importance of the individual elements that make up public and private consumption. This is not, it need hardly be said, an argument against economic planning, which is a device for avoiding being driven blindly to economic decisions by the signals coming from the market place. It is an argument about which of the alternative techniques of *signalling* is likely to prove more effective as a guide to a long-range investment strategy.

NONE OF THIS, of course, touches Heilbroner's complaint about the way in which the ownership of property is distributed. But one can readily concede the social inefficiency of the present arrangements which foster vast concentrations of inherited wealth without being forced to dispense with all property rights in business enterprises. It would be fairly easy to establish a set of arrangements which by a combination of wealth taxes and heavy death duties on the *recipients* of inherited wealth would systematically reduce the privileges and power that this brings to certain individuals and families. Any forecast of the future shape of Western capitalism would surely accord a high probability to such arrangements coming into general use.

But at the same time, it has to be remembered,

[6] *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism.* By DANIEL BELL. Heinemann, £5.75; Basic Books, $12.95.

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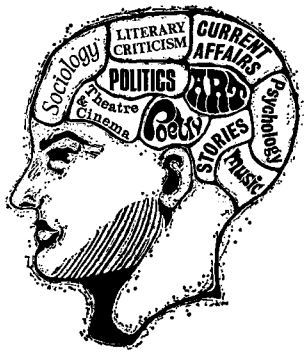
To Our Readers



IT IS, we know, rather tiresome but none the less real to go on every three or four years about the problem of "survival."

ENCOUNTER *has to live, for better or worse, by its wits. Its readers are devoted, its advertisers remain loyal. But the editorial life is a dangerous one in inflationary times. Since the spring of this year, when our publishing relationship with Open Court was suddenly (but honourably) terminated, we have been on our own, trying to make ends meet. The difficulties are great, but probably not insuperable. As one of our readers put it to us recently (he happens also to be a London bank manager), "Of course, capitalism is the worst system in the world for the running of an independent, international, intellectual review—except for all the others! . . . Other highbrow editors have to face commissars, you only have to face us. . . ." Bankruptcy, he was hinting, was less disagreeable than concentration camp; it was, at the moment, a small consolation.*

But we took the hint. And we have, accordingly, with great regret raised our prices beginning with this number. We hope to be able to count on the loyalty and devotion of our readers. And if they are so moved, they can help enormously by renewing their subscriptions for the next year now, and perhaps donating a Christmas subscription or two to a student or a local library. We know that in some areas (our list embraces subscribers in 94 countries around the world) there have been delays and complications; we acknowledge the complaints of various readers, especially in the USA, with heavy heart (but with some sneaking pride: after all they *want* their monthly copies) and assure them that, after the chaos of "going independent" in the spring, we are beginning to manage the problems of our new business burdens. Things, now that we are doing it all by hand in London, are improving.

We are especially grateful, in this time of crisis, for the support of Freedom House in New York. Its Trustees, directors and its staff gave us aid and advice, without which our campaign for supporters would have been so much more difficult. Among the supporters have been many of our own writers who have contributed generous donations, as well as a number of admirably unbureaucratic American and European foundations (including, we are happy to report as we go to press, the Arts Council of Great Britain).

Survival, the poet said, is all. We continue to prefer to deal with disagreeably numerate bank managers than ideologised smilers with a knife. But if any of our readers have any brilliant, or even only practical, ideas as to how to make ends meet, we would be happy to hear from them. Meanwhile new subscriptions—old renewals—pages of advertising—and indeed grants, stipends and donations, or enlightened patronage of any sort—are all most welcome.

M.J.L.

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CULTURE AND ANARCHY

WILL *Encounter* survive? According to its editor, MELVIN LASKY, in an anguished note to his readers, its difficulties are great but probably not insuperable—though only if readers and friends rally round with new subscriptions, old ones renewed (the price, alas, has gone up), grants, stipends, donations, patronage of any sort. Mr LASKY consoles himself with the thought, put to him by a banker-reader, that it is still better to face a squad of bankers than, as happens to highbrow editors behind the Iron Curtain, a firing squad or a "psychiatric clinic."

For 23 years *Encounter* has been indispensable reading for everyone interested in politics, society, literature, literary criticism, poetry, the arts in general, theatre, cinema, economics, philosophy, what's going on. It really would be astonishing and disgraceful if there are not enough such people in this country (and in other countries —it circulates in 94!) to keep a magazine like this going. It would be a criticism not of *Encounter*, but of us—or perhaps, more precisely, of the society we live in, which is cruel not only to what it calls privilege but also to all culture, taste, learning, refinement and distinction. The magazine is neither Left nor Right wing, though sturdily in favour of freedom and civilisation. It is cosmopolitan; it keeps the windows open; it is in no way insular, arguably not insular enough. The current issue typically includes an article by MILTON FRIEDMAN, Nobel Prize winner—the latest of many scoops, including SOLZHENITSYN....

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relatively minor individual accumulations of wealth, making up a very large sum in the aggregate, will be coming into the possession of many millions of wage-earners and others in Western industrial societies, who have not previously thought about how they would like to manage their personal capital. It is a safe bet that these property-owners, who are likely to form the great majority of our societies in the future, will want to keep as many options open for themselves as possible—indeed that they will press both for a wide range of alternative investments for their money and for the right of the owner to exercise effective surveillance and control over the management of the property of his choice.

It seems to me that this aspect of property and the popular attitudes towards it, which are likely to be reflected in the politics of the closing years of the 20th century, are insufficiently taken into account by Heilbroner and other contemporary social forecasters. They do not conflict with a policy directed towards reducing great personal or family concentration of *old wealth*. The euthanasia of the rentier has been predicted too freely and too often. His corpse may be about to be considerably invigorated!

A MORE FRUITFUL LINE of approach for the speculative sociologist concerned with the future would be perhaps to investigate popular attitudes in the newly affluent classes towards the justice, or injustice, of various modes of acquisition of substantial amounts of wealth. If these attitudes are relevant to the political feasibility of an effective incomes policy—and the latter is, as I believe, the condition for a return to a comfortably low rate of inflation in conditions of social peace and high employment—then the question may be crucial. The evidence certainly suggests that there is no popular hostility to people who become enormously rich very rapidly if—like entertainers for instance—they happen to do something which is approved of or enjoyed. Nor does it seem as if very large economic wealth, and even economic power, would be begrudged to an inventor—or even to an ingenious entrepreneur who set about successfully satisfying some previously unmet demand. But here, to be sure, one is only guessing.

What does seem to be clear is that ownership privilege which is not connected with personal performance tends to be resented. Judging by the auguries from Sweden and elsewhere, I think it is likely to be part of the programme of an advanced social democracy in a society of mass property ownership to try to ensure that wealth of of this kind is systematically reduced to insignificance.

This is *not* to say that the alternative to Heilbroner's scenario for the turn of the 20th century is one in which the sources of social conflict have been attenuated to the point of disappearance. The problems which he evokes—the growing difficulty of managing competing social claims which give rise to an intolerable rate of inflation; the weakening of work incentives especially as applied to unpleasant but essential jobs that society needs to have done for it; the unresolved friction between a dominant scientific-technical élite and the owners of capital; the need for more and more intrusion by government authority into decisions which have previously been privately made and where the sense of private purpose is strongly entrenched—all these, and others, remain.

MY OWN FEELING is that the immediate situation has, as usual in our time, served to distort the longer perspective—and is now likely to do so once again in a precisely opposite sense. What I have in mind is this. Having in the past three or four years tended to discount the prospects for the 1970s, regarding this decade moreover as only the prelude to worse things to come, we are now quite likely to be pleasantly, and excessively, surprised by our economic performance in the Western world in the run-up to the 1980s. There was a quite extraordinary advance in publicly-provided social welfare from the middle of the 1960s onwards; and this was accompanied in the late 1960s and early 1970s by an equally extraordinary advance in the wage claims made by and conceded to organised labour. We are now seeing a reaction on both fronts.

Looking around the Western world in the second half of the 1970s one finds in one country after another—almost as if they had communicated the same impulse to each other—a systematic effort to reduce the *share* taken by wage incomes and by publicly-financed social services from the national product. It seems, moreover, to elicit widespread electoral support. It is a matter of indifference whether a government of the Right or the Left or the Centre is in charge. At the moment the job is being done most prominently

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in Britain and in Germany, under the impulse of two Social Democratic governments. Heilbroner suggests that it is a firm rule that wages in our society always rise faster than productivity. But in 1975/76 productivity in several countries with powerful trade unions will have gone up significantly faster than wages—and the chief beneficiary, with the assent of the trade unions, will be profits.

At the same time as the share of social expenditure in Gross National Product is being cut back, production throughout the West looks as if it is set for a big advance. A careful examination of the possible impediments to economic growth in Western societies (the best analysis that I have seen to date) was conducted by the OECD last summer.[7] It came to the conclusion that there was no identifiable factor, technological or economic, that would cause a slowdown in the period immediately ahead. On the contrary, the economic circumstances provided an exceptional opportunity for an acceleration in the rate of increase in output in the West between now and 1980, beyond the level achieved in the high prosperity of the decade before the slump. Of course, always with the proviso of "politics permitting." The economic advance was faster in the 1960s than in the 1950s; and now, if the political will is once again present, there is the prospect that the advance of the late 1970s will be faster still.

[7] See OECD *Economic Outlook*, "A Growth Scenario to 1980" (Paris, July 1976).

The OECD report did identify some problems further ahead, from the early 1980s onwards. Probably the most important of these is the long-term threat from our current failure to put enough resources into fixed productive capital investment, at the same time as the output per unit of capital investment looks as if it may be declining. The latter is due, among other things, to the fact that we are spending more capital on the protection of the environment, while we are being forced to go deeper into the earth and to remoter places to win the minerals that we need. Thus, the favourable situation in the short term may once again lead to the wrong inference being drawn about the underlying trend. The scare will be over.

However, the deeper problems of achieving sustained economic progress in the face of the longer-term constraints on our space for manoeuvre—social as well as natural space—including those enumerated by Heilbroner, will not have been solved, though some of them may look as if they have gone away.

My purpose is certainly not to join the prospective chorus which will shortly be denying their existence. It has been to suggest that there is a lot of mileage yet in the capitalist mixed economy in the era of permanent reform. Heilbroner's dictum is that

> "the economic institutions of socialism may prove superior to those of capitalism, whereas the political institutions of capitalism may present advantages over those of socialism (as matters now stand)."

This seems to me seriously to underestimate our economic capacity in the run-up to the year 2000.

Arcady

Bright poppies in brown corn;
A silent pond, the red-finned roach
Cold in your hand; orchards,
Long grass; old cottages
Crumbling among staked scarlet runners,
Peas, black oozing plums:

A small girl naked by
A summer road, the Arcady
You travelled from still close
About her toes, her hair,
The red wound like a burn
Your memory has never healed.

John Loveday

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H. J. Eysenck

The Case of Sir Cyril Burt

On Fraud & Prejudice in a Scientific Controversy

I WAS IN Graz, in the Austrian Steiermark, attending a conference on Genetics and Environment, when several shocked colleagues approached me and asked about the background of some news items that had just appeared in the local paper, to the effect that Sir Cyril Burt had faked his famous data on the inheritance of intelligence. This accusation of fraud originated with the *Sunday Times* in London. Its medical correspondent, Dr Oliver Gillie, had just published a popular book on what he called "the genetic controversy",[1] and apparently considered the opportunity ripe for launching an all-out attack on the man who was probably Britain's outstanding psychologist for many years, who had been knighted for his services to education, and who had achieved world fame for his contributions to psychometrics, to social psychology, and to behavioural genetics. Basically, Gillie's allegations were these:

(1) Burt had published articles in collaboration with two ladies whose very existence he doubted. Gillie suggested that in spite of consulting people close to Burt, looking at registers at University College, where Burt was Professor for many years, and even advertising in the papers, he had been unable to find any trace of these mysterious ladies.

(2) Burt had guessed rather than measured the IQs of many of his subjects.

(3) A third major accusation was that he had on some 20 occasions published data in which the numbers of subjects varied, but not certain statistics, such as the correlation between the twins constituting the samples. On these grounds Gillie accused Burt of forgery, and suggested that this might be one of the great scientific frauds of the century.

The *Sunday Times* "sensation" found support in a well-orchestrated chorus of condemnation of Burt by various psychologists, none of whom had actually worked in the behavioural genetics field, and *l'affaire Burt* soon took on proportions of an international scandal. Oliver Gillie and his followers also suggested that the facts disclosed would inevitably lead to a complete reconsideration of the whole argument about the influence of genetics on IQ, the IQ and race debate, and various other important issues.

ON THE FACE OF IT, there clearly seems to be at least some substance in what Gillie alleged. Looking closer, however, one gets a whiff of McCarthyism, of notorious smear campaigns, and of what used to be known as character assassination.

Let us first of all assume that what Gillie suggests is in fact true. It does not even begin to suggest that Burt actually *forged* his data, or dealt with them fraudulently. The *possibility* that he did cannot *a priori* be ruled out, but unless we abandon completely the principle that a man must be considered innocent until proved guilty the insistence on fraud, on faking, on intentional misdemeanour seems a little premature. What Gillie might justifiably have said might have been that there were certain inconsistencies in Burt's data which called in question the interpretation which might be put upon them. To go further than that can hardly be considered good journalism, simple decency, or even justifiable criticism. If Burt had indeed been careless, then his scientific reputation would inevitably suffer. That is the law of scientific endeavour, and with this it is impossible to argue; if there is any question at all about a set of data or calculations, then that set must be

[1] *Who Do You Think You Are?* By OLIVER GILLIE. Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, £4.95. For my view of the inadequacies of this work see my review in *Books & Bookmen* (London, August, p.14).

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eliminated from serious discussion. What this means in terms of the theory of genetic determination of IQ, I will have to consider later. However, it should not be assumed (as Gillie suggests) that the elimination of one set of data from literally hundreds would make any great difference to the argument.

But first let us look more closely at the accusations. The first relates to the alleged non-existence of two of Burt's co-authors, both female, and both associated with him in the authorship of papers published in the *British Journal of Statistical Psychology* (edited at the time by Sir Cyril). Professor John Cohen, of Manchester University, has since written to say that he was in point of fact acquainted with one of the two women when he was at University College, as a student of Burt's and that Mrs Margaret Howard did indeed exist.[2] This rather weakens the force of this particular charge. One also wonders how seriously Dr Gillie took his task of investigation when he failed to contact Professor Cohen, known as one of Burt's most eminent pupils, or indeed myself, who was also one of Burt's pupils at the same time. I think one must conclude that this first charge is not only unfounded but carelessly amateurish and poor investigative procedure. Unfortunately this is not the first time that the *Sunday Times* has erred on the subject of Sir Cyril Burt. In 1969 the *Sunday Times* published what I can only call a direct lie concerning him. Sir Cyril, then alive (he died in October 1971, at the age of 88), had mentioned that an article giving certain relevant statistics had been written by him for the *Irish Journal of Education*. The *Sunday Times* report said that the Editor of the *Irish Journal* had been contacted, and he had said that he had "never heard" of the article. The Editor in question wrote in straight away to say that the article did in fact exist and was indeed already being prepared for the printer. After about a month the *Sunday Times* was forced to publish a letter by Professor C. B. Cox, correcting the grievous imputation of lying, and an apology was received from the personal assistant of the *Sunday Times* Editor.[3]

MY OWN EXPERIENCE of the accuracy of reports in the *Sunday Times* bears out the conclusions which I think one must draw from these facts. When my book on *Race, Intelligence and Education* (1971)[4] appeared, I was interviewed by three representatives of the paper, who then produced a whole page of mis-statements about my position, accusations of a grossly libellous nature, and conclusions completely at variance with my own views as I had communicated then to the interviewers. (The book was also reviewed in the book section of the paper, by a well-known geneticist, who praised it and thought I could have made an even stronger case for my views!) I have discussed this incident previously in the pages of ENCOUNTER,[5] and will not go into more detail here. I only mention it now to show that the sensationalising and inaccurate reporting to which Sir Cyril Burt was subjected is not confined to him; but it also affects others whose results and theories may conflict with the one-sided unscientific "environmentalistic" prejudices so clearly manifest in the paper.

WE MUST NEXT TURN, after this comic interlude of the missing ladies, to the much more serious accusation of errors in calculation. Here the situation is rather different.

Some four or five years ago, Professor Arthur Jensen went through all the published articles of Sir Cyril (as well as much other material) to bring together and re-analyse evidence concerning the inheritance of intelligence. He discovered 20 cases where Sir Cyril had re-analysed twin data several times, adding new cases each time; thus the number of cases in the analyses differed. However, some of the results (*e.g.* the correlations between twins) were identical from analysis to analysis, even to the third decimal. This is so unlikely as to be practically impossible. As Jensen says:

> "Any particular instance of an invariant *r* despite a changed *N* can be rationalised as being not too improbable. But 20 such instances unduly strain the laws of chance and can only mean error, at least in some cases. But error there surely must be."

[2] The *Sunday Times'* headline put "exist" in quotes —as if persons must be assumed to be non-existent unless their identity could be quickly established by a Fleet Street reporter.

[3] The *Sunday Times* confessed at that time (11 December 1969) that "our correspondent did not think it necessary to check with him [the Editor of the *Irish Journal* who could have, in a moment on the telephone, confirmed or denied the allegation]. He agrees now—he should have done so. . . ." Admirable procedures in investigative reporting indeed!

[4] It was published in the USA as *The IQ Argument* (1971).

[5] See my article "The Dangers of the New Zealots", ENCOUNTER (December 1972).

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Jensen concluded that for further analysis and theory-testing, Burt's data could no longer be relied upon; it had to be rejected as useless, a conclusion which it is difficult to fault. Note that it does *not* contain any suggestion of fraud, but simply of error, possibly even of carelessness. These are serious accusations to bring against a scientist, but they do not carry the implications of Gillie's unjustified attacks in the *Sunday Times*.

What were the reasons for these errors? Here again I must side with Arthur Jensen who writes:

> "The reporting of kinship correlations at times with and at times without noting the sample size, the rather inconsistent reporting of sample sizes, the higher than ordinary rate of misprints in Burt's published tables . . . and the quite casual description of the tests and the exact procedures and methods of data analysis all stand in quite strange and marked contrast to the theoretical aspects of Burt's writings in this field, which were elegantly and meticulously composed, with profound erudition and impressive technical sophistication. It is almost as if Burt regarded the actual data as merely an incidental backdrop for the illustration of the theoretical issues in quantitative genetics, which, to him, seemed always to hold the centre of the stage."

This is well said, and from personal knowledge of Burt's attitude I think almost certainly true. One must bear in mind that at the time of data collection and calculation, standards of evidence were less strict than today; and it would, I feel, be wrong to judge anyone whose work in this field was begun before his critics had been born, by today's standards. We shall just have to go on collecting our own data, paying attention to the more rigorous standards of today, and making use of the advances in data analysis and model building which we owe to Sir Cyril, without hysterical accusations of fraudulence and fake. We should also pay attention, I think, to the fact that the errors were discovered by Arthur Jensen several years ago, and published by him in the journal *Behavior Genetics*. The sensationalised version published by Dr Gillie does not even mention this fact, and leaves only the impression that his investigative zeal was responsible for amassing the evidence which led to Sir Cyril's "unmasking" and yet another *Sunday Times* scoop.

We still have to consider the third accusation, namely that Burt did not measure IQs, but (in part, at least) attributed them on a purely subjective basis. Here again we must take an historical point of view. When Sir Cyril began his work, there were no standardised tests of intelligence in existence; he was the first to introduce such tests into England. Hence for some time he was working with tests he was standardising, and with novel test-problems he was trying out. This made it impossible for him to list the tests used, as would be done today. But there is an additional point, relevant to his use of "final assessments" instead of raw IQ scores. As Burt used to argue, the IQ is an imperfect measure of the wholly innate "intelligence" which we are trying to analyse. The IQ is an imperfect measure because the genetic part is disturbed by environmental effects (*e.g.* poor upbringing, bad schooling, etc.). If we could get evidence on these "perturbations", then we could correct the observed values of the IQ, and thus come nearer to the "true" values of the child's (or adult's) intelligence. Thus, two children might both have an IQ of 120. Yet, he would argue, if one of these came from a poor, badly-educated and generally deprived home, while the other came from a typical upper-middle-class home, then the deprived child clearly was born with a superior intelligence, and his IQ should be corrected *upwards*, while that of the other child should be corrected downwards. This is the origin of his "*adjusted scores*"; and with someone of his unrivalled expertise and experience in this field the method would almost certainly produce results nearer to the genotype (*i.e.* the inherited degree of intelligence) than would the uncorrected IQ. This method does not amount to any attempt at "fraudulence." It is a reasonable, although unfortunately highly subjective, effort to derive the best available assessment of a child's inherited ability. Nowadays we would prefer to do this by giving numerical values to the various environmental elements entering into the calculation, and combining them for the purpose of correction in a proper regression formula. This, in effect, was what Sir Cyril did; but unfortunately he never published the details, and to that extent he was culpable by our present-day standards. This again is a far cry from complaints of "faking" or arbitrary invention of data. Note also that Dr Gillie was far from having "discovered" these possible aberrations. Professor Arthur Jensen published a detailed account of the criticisms to be made of Burt's methods of work in 1974, and anticipated all later complaints. Thus Gillie is merely sensationalising, in a particularly nasty and suggestive form, facts which had been brought out in a dignified and reasonable way by Professor Jensen.

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ONE FURTHER POINT. For an experienced psychologist to interview a child, or an adult, and suggest a reasonable IQ estimate is far from black magic or fraud. It is well known what children of different IQ can achieve in the way of reading, writing, general knowledge, etc., at different ages; and obtaining information on these points from parents, teachers and others enables the experienced child psychologist to give a tentative estimate which is unlikely to be far out. Catherine Cox Miles, a collaborator of Lewis M. Terman in his famous studies of genius, published a most interesting book in which she took hundreds of historical figures—among them Napoleon, Goethe, Macaulay, Mill, *et al.*—and estimated their IQs on the basis of such material as was available about their childhood performances. We would nowadays have some methodological and other objections to this kind of analysis; but at the time it was accepted as perfectly valid, and to criticise Sir Cyril in terms of our present-day more critical standards for what at the time of his work was considered perfectly admissible seems more than a trifle hypercritical.

I MUST NOW RETURN to the question of just what damage these "revelations" may do to the theories of the genetic determination of intelligence which Sir Cyril shared with Arthur Jensen, with the present author, and indeed with practically every writer familiar with the literature and capable of following the rather complex statistical arguments of modern behavioural geneticists.

The *Sunday Times*, true to form, suggests that after their front-page story on 24 October 1976, we shall all just have to reconsider our theories. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Modern genetic models are not built on twin data alone, let alone being built on Cyril Burt's material. They are built on literally hundreds of different investigations, using dozens of different approaches, as I have tried to indicate in detail in my book on *The Inequality of Man* (1973). Thus, we rely very much on data from adopted children, who resemble their true parents much more in intelligence and personality than they do their adopted parents, although the latter have furnished their environment since birth. Children's intelligence regresses (from that of their parents, where the parents were either very bright or very dull) to the mean of the population. This is quite contrary to predictions from environmentalist theory. We observe *pleiotropy*, *i.e.* the determination of two quite different characters by the same gene(s); thus there is a close correspondence between IQ and the shape of the mandibular symphysis (the jaw bone). We discover inbreeding depression, *i.e.* the fact that children born of related parents, such as cousins, have lower IQs than children of unrelated parents. (This is also proof that high IQ is dominant over low IQ.) These and many other methods of investigation attest to the great importance of heredity in determining individual differences in IQ; and the total elimination of Burt's data does not make a jot of difference to this conclusion.

False ideas unfortunately abound in this field. But none is less realistic than the notion that the assessment of heritability is the be-all and end-all of modern behavioural genetics. What we are aiming at is simply the construction of a model which incorporates, at least in principle, all the different factors which determine the expression of a particular character (such as IQ; or Extraversion), and their interaction. Important among such factors is, of course, the additive genetic contribution. But there are also other genetic factors, such as dominance and assortative mating, *i.e.* the tendency of intelligent men to marry intelligent women, and dull men to marry dull women (there is a fairly high correlation of about .6 between spouses' IQ). The genetic contribution to the phenotype, *i.e.* the observed IQ scores, is in turn divided into *within-families* and *between-families* contribution; and in the same way an attempt is made to divide the environmental contribution into a *within-families* and a *between-families* portion. Thus, the influence of the parents would contribute to the between-families contribution, because different families have different parents; the influence of one's siblings would produce within-families effects, because different members of the family have different siblings (*e.g.*, in a two-child family, I have you as my brother or sister, you have me!).

THE MODEL not only *admits*, indeed it insists on the inclusion of environmental factors. It also includes at least two kinds of interaction between genetics and environment.

First we have simple interaction, *i.e.* the fact that different genotypes may respond differently to the same environmental effect. Thus, if a particular change in the environment raises

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everybody's IQ by 10 points, this is considered simple additive environmental effect. If it raises *disproportionately* the IQ of bright children, and not that of dull ones (or vice versa), then we have a case of interaction. A quite different type of interaction arises when genotypic values and environmental values are correlated in the population (correlated environments). An example is children with genotypes for high intelligence who are reared in homes with superior environmental advantages. These examples illustrate how far from the truth is the common accusation that geneticists pay no attention to interaction; the opposite is true. It is they, and not the environmentalists, who have attempted to incorporate interactions in their model of reality, to discriminate between different interactions, and generally to try and make the model as inclusive as possible.

WHY IS THIS CONTRIBUTION not recognised, and why is so much unjustified opprobrium directed at behavioural geneticists nowadays in terms of criticisms which might have been justified 20 or 30 years ago? In the words of Dr Johnson, the answer probably is "Ignorance, sheer ignorance." Few people, even among psychologists who write letters to newspapers on these matters, have become aware of the revolution which has taken place in the field, in the past dozen years or so, due to the work of the Birmingham school, which is based on the fundamental generalisation of Mendel's model to multigenetic inheritance (*i.e.* the inheritance of characters whose expression is determined by several genes, such as intelligence) by Sir Ronald Fisher in 1918. Both Sir Cyril Burt and Professor R. B. Cattell (a former student of Burt), played an important part in this development; but the major accomplishment is due to Professors Kenneth Mather and John Jinks who have provided us with a workable method of analysis which is being applied more and more widely to the data of behavioural genetics. Many of the criticisms still being directed at geneticists are quite justified when applied to the methods often used in the years preceding this scientific revolution, when over-simplified formulae having no genetic meaning were widely used. They are, I believe, quite irrelevant today. These new methods open up new vistas of much more detailed analysis of genetic and environmental determination of human behaviour; it is to be hoped that they will be learned and applied by psychologists and sociologists with a time-lag of less than the decade-span which looks likely at the moment.

Yet, as the question was put in *The Times'* correspondence columns: What is it all in aid of? Why are these formulae, and underlying them these conceptions of heredity and environment, so important? The reason is very simple. Most people probably imagine that geneticists experiment with and consider *genetic* causes of individual conduct, while sociologists and others experiment with and consider *environmental* causes. This is not only false in principle, it is a view which is responsible for an incredible amount of wasted labour, erroneous interpretation, and mistaken attribution of causal efficacy. The simple truth is that heredity and environment are not antagonistic factors which oppose each other. They always collaborate and interact in complex ways which cannot be untangled by simply looking at one or the other in isolation. No experiment can be designed to measure one influence apart from the other; such experiments are impossible to interpret. Environmentalists who refuse to learn the facts about genetics are effectively refusing to employ the only available method for carrying out a proper scientific analysis of behavioural data. They do not have an alternative model or scheme; none such has ever been suggested. In the nature of things, no such scheme can exist.

Let me give an example. Freudians and followers of R. D. Laing have advanced a theory on which the schizophrenic behaviour of certain individuals is produced by the behaviour of the "ice box" mother; this is supported by anecdotal stories of certain cases observed by them. Let us even suppose that a correlation between mother's behaviour and child's mental illness *could* be discovered. This would not prove in any way the theory in question. It is equally possible that genetic factors cause the behaviour of the mother, and that the behaviour of the child is determined by the inheritance of these factors. The genetic and environmental causes could interact, giving rise to correlations between heredity and environment. Refusal to design experiments which might bring out the genetic contribution simply makes it impossible to come to any conclusion on these points. I have recently reported a simple genetic twin experiment[6]

[6] H. J. Eysenck, *Psychoticism as a Dimension of Personality* (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1976).

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and was able to show that all the environmental factors were within-families, *i.e.* that the alleged Freudian and Laingian hypotheses found no support in the data. This experiment demonstrates that by using the modern genetic algorithms we can approach the scientific testing of environmental theories in a much more rigorous manner than was possible for those who disregarded the influence of genetic factors, and banned them from the design of their experiments.

LET ME RETURN to the case of Sir Cyril Burt. This brief excursion was intended to put the reader in the picture as far as the present position of behavioural genetics is concerned. The suggestions that Burt "faked" his data must, I think, be rejected out of hand, as having no support in any of the facts brought forward by his accusers. Furthermore, the notion that the elimination of his data from our total data pool would make the slightest difference to the scientific conclusion in respect to the general debate about the contribution of genetic and environmental causes to the observed differences in IQ is entirely mistaken; it could never be made by anyone familiar with this large and expanding technical literature. The fact that Sir Cyril treated his data somewhat cavalierly, and published incorrect statistical information which could be misleading, is strongly substantiated by Arthur Jensen's re-analysis of these data, and essentially makes it impossible to use these in future discussions. Thus Sir Cyril was guilty of a misdemeanour which is inexcusable in a scientist, however understandable it may be when looked upon from a historical point of view; for this offence the punishment in the scientific community is rightly a harsh one, leading effectively to exile from what Michael Polanyi called the Republic of Science.

What opprobrium is, however, suitable for the misdemeanour in the Republic of Letters? Far worse, in my view, is that misbehaviour committed by those who made Burt's known lapse into a sensationalised crime; who accused him, without a shred of proof of fraud, of faking data, and of other much more serious crimes than those he had committed; and who acted in deliberate disregard of the mainstay of our conception of law and justice which says that a man is presumed innocent until found guilty. "I am judge, I am jury, said cunning old Fury"—this is the voice of an irresponsible press. It is disappointing to find journals of quality repute like the *Sunday Times* ready and willing to lend themselves to such forays of witch-hunting.

Ideologised fanatics have always tried to expunge heresy to the best of their ability, without regard for fact, justice, or compassion. Hitherto, this has fortunately not been the climate of modern science. Jensen not only discovered the discrepancies in Burt's data; he also indicated in his article how such unfortunate occurrences could be avoided in the future. I found his critical treatment of Burt uncompromising, but fair; Gillie's strikes me as unspeakably mean and senselessly derogatory. Will this tend to be the future tone of scientific debate in the public prints. If so, I along with many other scientists would prefer to follow Candide's advice and cultivate our own gardens instead.

The War Poets

Unmarked were the bodies of the soldier-poets
For shrapnel opened up again the fontanel
Like a hailstone melting towards deep water
At the bottom of a well, or a mosquito
Balancing its tiny shadow above the lip.

It was rushes of air that took the breath away
As though curtains were drawn suddenly aside
And darkness streamed into the dormitory
Where everybody talked about the war ending
And always it would be the last week of the war.

Michael Longley

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Column

FOR MANY YEARS now this country has rightly prided itself on the enjoyment of a free press; it is, after all, one of the institutions which most sharply distinguish a democracy, unless it is a People's Democracy, from a totalitarian state. Not that anyone, I think, has ever seriously believed that the British press is wholly and absolutely free. It is subject to a number of constraints, some of them very severe. There are the laws of libel and contempt, and there is the Official Secrets Act. There are the pressures exercised by advertisers, and sometimes, though less so today than in the past, by the personal tastes and whims of megalomaniac newspaper proprietors. There is the tendency to semi-monopoly in the newspaper industry, which steadily reduces the number of newspapers, and therefore the variety of information and opinion available to the public. And perhaps one should add the self-censorship imposed on the press by itself; for the press is notoriously secretive about its own affairs. If it devoted to them one-tenth of the attention that it pays to, say, those of British Leyland, it would be in a healthier state than it is today.

Yet despite all these limitations, most people, I think, would agree with Miss Nora Beloff, Political Correspondent of *The Observer*, when she says in her new book, *Freedom under Foot*,[1] that "the British press, by comparison with anything that appears in totalitarian countries, left or right, is varied, lively and free", and I hope that they would wish it to continue to be so, because without a free press there can, quite simply, be no democracy.

Not that the press and its freedom, which it sometimes misuses, are without their enemies even in this country, and curiously enough many of them are to be found in Parliament, that other guardian of our liberties. As Miss Beloff says:

> Almost all politicians hate the press and accuse it of personalising the news and trivialising the issues. When in office, Mr Wilson developed a persecution complex about reporters, even those who were seriously concerned with political news and analysis. But there is no doubt that many of his colleagues would agree with him when, during the closed shop debate, he observed: "I get a little nauseated when I hear the phrase 'freedom of the press' used as freely as it often is. . . ." One well-known victim of gossip about his personal life described the worst part of the British press as "nasty, partisan, malicious, vindictive and mendacious." Others would use stronger language.

And not only the politicians; have we not heard echoes of such language coming from another Palace than Westminster? Perhaps this hostility to the Press explains why, when it believed it was in danger, it found itself sadly short of friends and allies.

But, among the enemies of the press, one would not until quite recently have expected to find Mr Michael Foot. For in the past no one has prided himself more on his passion for freedom of speech and expression, and no one has made more eloquent use of it. When, shaking his grey locks in his celebrated imitation of a Henry Irving out of control, Mr Foot thundered in defence of liberty, the House of Commons trembled; here, it was felt, was the genuine Tribune of the People, who would not allow any restriction of our traditional liberties, except over his dead body. Yet, when the moment came, it was Mr Foot who was primarily responsible for exposing the Press to a kind of threat which it had never known before, and who laboured mightily to make that threat a reality. One began to wonder whether, where the freedom of the press is concerned, Mr Foot was really to be trusted as a champion of liberty and whether in the last resort he did not think the closed shop more important. Somehow, on this occasion, his behaviour strengthened the feeling one has sometimes had, that perhaps one day he might turn out to be not so much a Foot as a Mouth.

Miss Beloff's short book is, she says, the story of

> a battle fought and lost against a Bill sponsored by Mr Michael Foot which authorised a closed shop in British journalism. The opponents of the Bill, editors, writers, publishers, academics, members of other liberal professions and libertarians from all the major parties, managed to delay it by almost a year. But since March 1976, when it received the Royal Assent, there is no longer any legal curb to prevent one single union from deciding who may write in British newspapers.

The purpose of the Bill in question was to remove the legal restraints imposed on the unions by Mr Heath's ill-fated Industrial Relations Act, and to assure them that they would suffer no legal consequences as a result of any action they might take, including the establishment of the closed shop, to promote the interests of their members; the "one single union" is the National Union of Journalists which, as a result of the passage of the Bill into law, potentially has the power to insist that no one shall be allowed to write for the newspapers unless he or she is a member of the union. The NUJ, Miss Beloff says,

[1] *Freedom under Foot: The Closed Shop in British Journalism.* By NORA BELOFF. Temple Smith, £4, paper £1.95.

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> aims at one hundred per cent membership in newspapers, broadcasting, magazine and book publishing . . . and, like most other trade unions, reserves for its Executive absolute discretion in deciding on admission and expulsion.

It is, however, fair to add that this discretion is in fact limited by a right of appeal by the member concerned.

Freedom under Foot is a blow-by-blow account of the debates in Parliament, and the efforts made outside Parliament, by which the opponents of the Bill succeeded in holding it up for a year. If its villain is Mr Foot, its hero is Lord Goodman, who fought gallantly but unavailingly against the Bill both in and out of Parliament. It is not a comforting book to read, not only because, as in a bad Western, the villain wins and the hero is defeated, but because the light it throws on our legislative processes in general tends to confirm the worst suspicions inspired by the *Crossman Diaries*. At times one feels that one is trying to grope one's way through a particularly dense patch of undergrowth; this has its own fascination because from time to time one is suddenly brought face to face with the strange animals which lurk there, and very nasty some of them are.

If one has a criticism to make of *Freedom under Foot*, it is that Miss Beloff has tried to do too much in too short a space. The story of the struggle against the Bill is an immensely complicated and involved one, and to appreciate all the issues involved demands a considerable knowledge of parliamentary procedures, trade-union legislation, the personalities involved, the political situation of the particular moment. In particular, the negotiations between the interested parties at times become so tortuous as to be positively labyrinthine, and one is not at all surprised that some of the participants occasionally seem to have become confused about what exactly they were trying to do. The diplomatic initiatives of Mr Alastair Hetherington, for instance, then editor of *The Guardian*, have a high comedy which is all their own. To stage-manage a cast which from time to time included, apart from Mr Foot himself and Lord Goodman, Mr David Astor, of *The Observer*, Mr Harold Evans, of the *Sunday Times*, Sir Max Aitken, of Beaverbrook Newspapers, Mr Charles Wintour, of the *Evening Standard*, all ostensibly engaged in a common purpose but each at times at cross-purposes with the others, is a task which might defeat the most accomplished producer, and I am not sure that Miss Beloff has overcome all its difficulties. But no doubt she would excuse herself by what she rightly takes to be the urgency of her task of warning us against the dangers with which the Press is now faced.

DESPITE SUCH A CRITICISM, *Freedom under Foot* is certainly a book which everyone should read who has the cause of the freedom of the Press at heart, for Miss Beloff has succeeded, the complexity of her subject matter notwithstanding, in making the basic issues admirably clear. There were really two and they reacted on one another in a curious way. One has the feeling that the opponents of the Bill were not able to disentangle them from each other, while Mr Foot never had any doubt which of the two had priority. On the one hand, there were the very obvious and real dangers to editorial freedom and to the freedom of the writer, in particular the independent writer, of giving to a single union the ultimate power to decide who may write for a newspaper, and in consequence what may be written. The object of the Bill's opponents was so to amend it as to provide legal safeguards against the misuse of this power in such a way as to diminish the freedom which the Press has hitherto enjoyed, and one might have expected that Mr Foot, once a journalist himself and an ex-editor of the *Evening Standard*, would have been sympathetic to such an aim. In fact, he proved remarkably cool and indifferent towards it, and throughout the struggle over the Bill remained resolutely determined that, while a few cosmetic embellishments might be applied to it, nothing should or would be done which in any way affected the fundamental principle on which it was based.

Here, however, a different issue was involved. The main object of Mr Foot's Bill had nothing to do with the freedom of the Press, which was, for its sponsor, a side issue. His Bill was directed at repealing Mr Heath's industrial legislation, and at assuring the unions that they would incur no legal liabilities under the common law in promoting the interests of their members, whether by establishing the closed shop or by any other means; and this applied to the Press as to every other industrial establishment. It was useless to argue with Mr Foot that the Press, as a purveyor of the written word, was not simply and solely an industrial enterprise, but had a special aspect which gave it an exceptional status and deserved the protection of the law. It was all the more difficult to do so because, in fact, in Britain, unlike other countries, there are no specific laws or constitutional conventions which guarantee the freedom of the Press. To concede the Press an exceptional status under the Bill would have been to defeat its entire purpose, which was to guarantee the unions legal immunity in pursuing their proper ends. The unions have an ambiguous, though essentially simple attitude towards the law. If it is on their side, they use it, as they have every right to do; if it is not, they wish to

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enjoy immunity from it, which is the desire of all over-mighty subjects.

To satisfy this natural and primitive desire was the essential object of Mr Foot's Bill, and by comparison the liberty of the Press was of minor importance. Indeed, he had very little choice in the matter; if there had been a choice, who knows where his sympathies would have been? Would some lingering love of liberty have induced him to make genuine concessions to the wretched rabble of editors, writers, publishers, newspaper proprietors, who opposed his Bill, a motley and ineffectual crew indeed compared with the monolithic solidarity of the trade unions in this matter? For a guarantee of their legal immunity was a fundamental condition of the bargain, dignified by the name of the Social Contract, which the unions had struck with the Labour government. No legal immunity, no Social Contract; it was as simple as that, even if it meant sacrificing the freedom of the Press.

Thus there really was no possibility of compromise between Mr Foot and his opponents, though Mr Foot was willing to accept the concession of inserting into the Bill a voluntary Press Charter guaranteeing the good behaviour of the unions. How he would have mocked such a manoeuvre in the days when his was the organ voice of liberty! But behind Mr Foot stood Mr Jack Jones, and Mr Jones knew what he wanted, which was the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill, and intended to have it. And behind Mr Jones stood the unions, while behind the opponents of the Bill stood only a disorganised collection of individuals; in such a conflict they were hopelessly outmatched. Miss Beloff makes much of a letter of protest against the Bill signed by a large number of distinguished writers, which was published in the *Times Literary Supplement*, but in a showdown with the expressed will of the unions a letter in the *TLS* is about as much use as—I was going to say a speech by Mr Foot, only in this case his speeches had the unions behind them, so that they acquired genuine meaning and content. There was, it is true, Lord Goodman, who fought valiantly to the end; only by then he seems to have been, by Miss Beloff's account, very much on his own, the last man on a sinking ship.

What is remarkable, perhaps, is that the Bill's opponents, although they succeeded in delaying its passage into law by almost a year, were not able either to rally to their side any powerful and organised body of public opinion, or to detach from the Labour Party a sufficient number of Labour Members of Parliament to defeat the Bill, or to amend those sections of it which represented a danger to the freedom of the Press. After all, they had at their disposal some of the most powerful and influential organs of the Press; it might have been expected that a coordinated campaign against the Bill, and in defence of its own liberties might have struck some answering chord in the mind of the public. There was a time when the mobs would have been out in the London streets in defence of the liberty of the Press; on this occasion, the public reacted to the Bill with the apathy of a sick man who passively watches while thieves make away with what were once his most treasured possessions.

As for the Labour Party, it showed the solidarity of men who recognise that they have made a deal and realise that they must stick to it. In this respect, it is interesting to compare, or rather contrast, the success of Mr Foot's Repeal Bill with the defeat recently suffered by the Docks Labour Regulation Bill, which was to have been the latest instalment payment made by the Government on the price of the Social Contract. In the case of the Docks Labour Regulation Bill, Mr Jack Jones once again stood behind it; indeed, it was particularly dear to his heart, because it directly affected, and promoted, the interests of the members of his own union. But on this occasion, the Bill threatened the interests of other unions. Moreover, there were Labour Members of Parliament who were themselves both personally opposed to the Bill, and who felt that they must respect and respond to the hostility to the Bill which existed in their own constituencies. Since the unions were unable to speak with a single voice, and since, in certain constituencies, the pressure of public opinion was able to make itself felt, the Bill, by the narrowest of majorities, was defeated and the Government was forced to default in its latest payment of tribute to Mr Jones; though, like all defaulting debtors, with promises to pay later. In the meantime, Mr Jones was willing to be patient. After all, it is no good pressing a near-bankrupt debtor too hard, or to kill the goose which lays the golden eggs.

There was no such combination of circumstances in the case of Mr Foot's Bill to repeal the Industrial Relations Act, and therefore Mr Foot and Mr Jones were able to have it passed into law. The story which Miss Beloff has to tell is a sad one, in more than one respect. But the saddest one of all perhaps is that, where the trade unions are concerned, the British people seem unable, or are too frightened, to recognise a danger to liberty when they see one.

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Herbert Lomas

Elegy for John Ridgewell

Drowned in the Humber, March 1968

These houses keep shaking as the lumbering voices go by. They give
The walls a shaking but they're not really for you or me.
Their owners are elsewhere in other cities while we're trying to sleep.
Even awake beings with huge metal hands are craning by.

In the air on huge bows there's news of various wars we can't hear
For the great voices wheeling by. There are times you're pushing
Clean brown furrows across slopes and slopes, there's bread
In the wind, trousers corded at the knees, a blowing white shirt

And red kerchief splashed round your neck. This is at night
And the great lights go across the ceiling. On nightwatch
Sea lorries are crashing the tracks of fishes. Underneath
Huge whales are opening their eyes out of sleep and nosing the currents.

You can tell where an animal is. We've been out of the sea a while.
As you watch the clouds that come out of the sea, they're going back in,
As if they were posting themselves. It won't be like that. The message
You're going to deliver isn't the one you came here with.

*

A sandstone girl looking in a mirror-Indian statuette, 11th century

She's not looking at
What we're looking at.

We're looking at her bottom
And her accoutrements
That hide nothing.

Four cords at the fingerable
Delicious bump of the spine,
As her inviting buttocks begin.
Then a vertical cord slips down
The cleavage to three cords round
Her thighs, framing the folds
That flesh is folding inwards,
Pointing to secrets: forget.

The other thing's the great
Hole of her earring.
Then there's something
Like a python dangling
Down the whole of her side.

But what is it she's hiding
In her great unisex
Sage's face?—suddenly faced
By a hole behind her face?

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In his beard and black jacket
Cold and a little hunched
With his six-foot-seven stoop
Like a secular friar

Cold and a little hunched
After long penance
Waiting for his death
Like a longboned friar

I'm glad I looked at him carefully
Concentrated for death
That was twenty-four hours away
Though I didn't know

I'll remember him watching the sea
Though we didn't know he was going
It was calming him into happiness
He was round-eyed, ensured

Quelled into happiness
Stating affinity of water
In the sea that's always there
Here, round us, ensuring

Affinity of water
Feeling and being water
In the sea that's always near
Though he's gone now, relaxing

In the shovings of the Humber
Tidally unmasking
The face that's gone now
Unwinding his eyes

In the heavy Humber
Smashed in the river's muscles
Taking the face from the darkness
That's always conscious

Before we're drenched
And before we're dried
In a six-foot-seven stoop
And a beard and black jacket.

Peter Redgrove

George never rests

The green wireless in the churchyard, laying down
Its recordings, its stacked reels, the stepped
Stairs of the green bluffs, the continual wind.
Inside the church, gloom, but quiet, the old wood
Of the pews laid to rest, and behind
The inscribed stone slabs total quiet:
Silently breaking silence a turmoil window,
The only window: St George in silver
Fighting a green-and-gold dragon that lapped him
That must have broiled him with its breath
Playing on his metal suit, and it held him still,
But then the wind started up again
And the shadows in that window struggled
And St George roasted in a hearth of black flames
Where he writhed with a dragon and stabbed
Again and again at the undying worm, and he throws
Down his sword and great stripes scar his face
And he has his sword again in the deaf windows of the church.
The wind rolls out to sea in its coils
It circles the globe, it has never heard of St George.

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The Reputation of George Sand

By Renee Winegarten

A HUNDRED years ago, in June 1876, George Sand was laid to rest in the grounds of her home at Nohant. At the funeral, Flaubert wept bitterly. "She will remain one of the splendours of France and her fame will know no equal," he wrote (surprising as it may appear to some nowadays) of his friend, the self-styled "old troubadour" whose views on art, politics, and life had so often differed from his own.[1]

Also present at the funeral of "the inspired poet", whose novels were often seen as musical prose poems, was Ernest Renan. He mourned

> "that sonorous soul, who was as it were the Aeolian harp of our era. . . . When this poor nineteenth century which we abuse is no more, people will grow attached to it and will keenly inquire into it, and one day much will be forgiven it. Then George Sand will come to life again and will become our interpreter. . . . Her books are likely to enjoy immortality, because they will always bear witness to what we have wished, thought, felt, suffered."[2]

So, for Renan, George Sand seemed a figure of central importance who could ultimately help towards an understanding of the 19th century. Today, rather than the one hundred and more volumes of the Complete Works, it is largely the autobiographical writings and (as with Byron) the vivid letters which contribute to this end.[3]

While Henry James mischievously queried whether the former seminarist was acquainted with much of George Sand's fiction (a few years earlier, James himself could claim to have read all her tales, no mean feat), he observed of this passage that it was "very finely said."[4] In fact, Renan—like Dostoevsky—had been much affected by *Spiridion*, a striking mystery tale of spiritual unrest, which did not appeal to James. By the time James sent his obituary essay to New York, his enthusiasm for George Sand was cooling. But apparently he, along with Flaubert and Renan, had little doubt then that her fame would endure, though as a critic he was already more concerned to map its limits.

Perhaps the most moving tribute of all was penned by Dostoevsky, who owed so much to her inspiration and who, when he learned of George Sand's death, recalled what "this poet" had meant to him, and what happiness her works had given him. His aim was not to write a critical essay, but to say a few words of farewell to one who had touched him deeply, a woman of exceptional intellect and talent, who would never fade from the annals of European society.

Then Dostoevsky made a strange remark: he said that George Sand (who could be virulently anti-clerical) was paradoxically "the most Christian of all the French writers."[5] In his own terms he could not have paid her a greater compliment, and he clearly saw in her an expression of that unassuaged "spiritual thirst of humanity" which was one of his own obsessions. For Dostoevsky, George Sand remained associated with the noble side of the youthful idealism which had led him to revolutionary activism, mock execution, and penal servitude: her views were to be distinguished from those base atheistic doctrines which would lead mankind straight to the ant-heap.

THE LAST OF THESE TRIBUTES by eminent contemporaries was written in England and was evidently the fruit of careful cogitation. Matthew Arnold, remembering his visit to George Sand at Nohant in 1846, when he was a young dandy, felt no more inclined than Dostoevsky to make a critical evaluation of her work. He simply wanted "to recall . . . to my own mind the elements of that powerful total-impression which, as a writer, she made upon me. . . . " For, Arnold maintained,

[1] Gustave Flaubert, Letter to Mlle Leroyer de Chantepie, 17 June 1876, *Correspondance* (ed. Conard, 1930), vol. 7, p. 305.

[2] Ernest Renan, "George Sand", *Feuilles détachées* (1892), pp. 289, 293–4.

[3] Published in Georges Lubin's splendid edition (*Correspondance*, Garnier, 1964–), now fortunately for all those interested in the 19th century, once more in progress.

[4] Henry James, "George Sand", *New York Tribune*, 22 July 1876, *Literary Reviews and Essays* (ed. Mordell, 1957), p. 133.

[5] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Le Journal d'un écrivain* (June 1876, tr. Chuzeville, 1927), vol. 2, p. 208.

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"We do not know her unless we feel the spirit which goes through her work as a whole." And that spirit was inseparable from social idealism, from "the aspiration towards a purged and renewed human society."[6] Through George Sand he had come to affirm the need for a more "human" way of life, and if he could not be quite as enthusiastic as she was about equality, he could at least require that there should not be massive inequality. Admiration for the scope of George Sand's social concern probably helped to save him from sterile aestheticism.

In Arnold's view, and here he agreed with Flaubert and Renan, with James and Dostoevsky,

> "the immense vibration of George Sand's voice upon the ear of Europe will not soon die away. . . . There will remain of her to mankind the sense of benefit and stimulus from the passage upon earth of that large and frank nature, of that large and pure utterance—the *large utterance of the early gods.*"

Arnold, however, was certainly mistaken in thinking that her stormy passions and affairs would be forgotten, and that the "chain of sympathy" between future generations and the author of *Indiana* would grow.

GEORGE SAND *(by Alfred de Musset)*

THE SURPRISING thing about these tributes, which fuse into a resounding elegiac chorus, uttered by writers whose reputations are undimmed, is their lofty tone. And this loftiness is not due solely to the funereal occasion, when it might seem rather distasteful to expatiate upon youthful follies and scandals. While reservations concerning morality or literary merit may be voiced, none the less what stands out is the enduring warmth of individual indebtedness both in those who knew her personally and those who had simply admired her from afar.

The George Sand of whom these writers were speaking—the embodiment of the mistakes but also of the dreams of an era, of its wide-ranging intellectual curiosity, and of its social and spiritual disquiet—bears little resemblance to the gushing nymphomaniac of a recent television serial. If George Sand is recalled today, it is largely as the "notorious woman" who, in the 1830s, dared to wear male attire, smoke in public, take numerous lovers, and who happened also to write books, now for the most part unread.

Even the feminists have not made as much of her as her claims to equal sexual satisfaction, or her brief hint of lesbianism, might lead one to expect. Simone de Beauvoir, for instance, rarely alluded to her predecessor in *The Second Sex*. Possibly, their embarrassment derives from the fact that George Sand *is* altogether too much: a woman who had too many famous lovers and suspected lovers, sometimes more than one at a time; who was on terms of camaraderie with too many eminent figures in politics and philosophy, literature and drama, painting and music; who wrote too many plays, and too many books of unequal merit; and who passed through too many phases, proclaiming her fidelity to the truth of the moment. She was too changeable, too diverse, too contradictory, far too compromised and compromising to be a banner.

Indeed, how "large" she seems (to use Arnold's term) in courage and vitality, good sense and folly, experience and scope, energy and ambition! Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and George Eliot were certainly as alive to her range as were those who paid tribute to her at her death. Strong as was Henry James's admiration for George Eliot (dogged by comparisons with the French authoress), he could say of George Sand that "she had the greatest instinct of expression ever conferred on a woman. . . ."[7] And Dostoevsky once told a girl assistant who wanted to write, "There is only one woman writer in the whole world, worthy of the name. . . . That is George Sand. Can you be somebody like George Sand?"[8]

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[6] Matthew Arnold, "George Sand" (written 1877), *Mixed Essays* (1879), pp. 320–322. See also Lionel Trilling, *Matthew Arnold* (1939), pp. 29–30, 381–2; Christophe Campos, *The View of France* (1965), pp. 17, 21, 41–2.

[7] Henry James, "George Sand" (1897), *Notes on Novelists* (1914), p. 130.

[8] Leonid Grossman, *Dostoevsky* (tr. Mackler, 1974), p. 491.

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PEOPLE TOOK WHAT SUITED THEM from the cornucopia provided by this convent-educated descendant of a line of royal bastards and plebeian kept women. For some, it was the example of her revolt against the ties of her union with Casimir Dudevant, a fairly limited fellow who thought he had married an ordinary country gentlewoman and instead, found himself yoked to "the sister of Goethe." For others, it was her bold Byronic bid for freedom of action comparable with that of men, and the agonised analysis of her various kinds of experience which extended from the platonic to the deeply sensual, candidly expressed for those prepared to interpret the euphemisms of the age.

For many, it was the eloquent, Rousseau-like casuistry with which she justified her conduct and the adventures of her heroines, while leaving somewhat vague whether that conduct was suitable for all or solely for an élite of strong or artistic spirits like herself. Yet others seized on the way she had succeeded in compelling recognition as a professional writer who made her living by her pen (in an age when a woman's sphere lay elsewhere). Later, as she made the journey from romantic egocentrism by way of the violent radical republicanism of her proletarian lover, Michel de Bourges, to the social and political messianism of Pierre Leroux and to political activism during the Revolution of 1848, she attracted and inspired many of those who were variously engaged in the quest for a better life, whether these were reformers or active revolutionaries.

Between the poet, the Aeolian harp, the stimulus of the age, and the woman who, as a psychological case, excites a certain prurient curiosity or a certain impatience, the gap is so great that it may be worthwhile to inquire how her reputation was established in the first place, what precisely people saw in her, why she became a figure whom it was difficult to ignore (whether one cared for her or not). Her portrait as painted by some of her leading contemporaries may help towards a more just assessment of her contribution.

Now, when so many of the social changes that she desired have been accomplished, or even surpassed in some quarters—after all, it was Jacques, one of her eccentric characters, who foresaw a time when the "barbarous institution" of marriage would be superseded—such an assessment seems overdue. It would have to be based less upon the literary quality of her work as a whole, than upon the nature of her unique role as a creative woman of spirit who played a notable part, not only in literature but in social and political affairs, and who succeeded—through literature and life-style—in leaving her stamp upon the consciousness and the lives of her contemporaries, for good or ill. No woman, before or since, has filled such a remarkable role, though probably many now would like to do so, if they could.

THE REPUTATION of George Sand was established in 1832, with the first novel which Aurore Dudevant published under that pseudonym. *Indiana* conveys her own sense of sexual frustration and yearning, her protest against all limits. A romance rooted in the moral, social and political upheavals of the time, it still attracts by the freshness and charm of its manner. The style was considered superior to Stendhal's by one reviewer, who compared Raymon the seducer and cold political climber with Julien Sorel. A year later, the outspoken *Lélia* confirmed George Sand's place: the fact that the novel's cry of sexual and moral dissatisfaction had been uttered by a woman seemed to render it even more scandalous in some eyes.

While the critics of the day recognised the author's gifts—her vivacity, bold poetic imagination, narrative grip, lyrical and descriptive charm, introspective probing—they were intrigued by the novelist's personality. Was she man, woman, androgynous? "He or She? Enigma." Friends, lovers, or those who claimed to be her lovers, talked. The myth took off—and, it must be admitted, the truth did not lag far behind—so that opinion polarised between sympathisers and detractors. George Sand was no longer a human being and a writer, she was the "character" projected in her own fiction, or in other people's (Sandeau, Mérimée, Musset, Balzac were among those who portrayed her in fictional guise). She combined in her own person the supreme feminine duality: Eve's power of damnation (through her attacks on the sacrament of marriage, and hence on the divine order which rested upon the subordination of woman), and the Virgin's power of salvation (as the Saint-Simonists perceived when they offered her the post of "Mother Messiah", which she declined). Renan remembered how he had first heard of her in the former role in his youth in Britanny around 1836 or 1837, when he saw a lithograph where she was depicted in the act of trampling on a crucifix.

By 1838, Stendhal, who thoroughly disliked her widely admired flowing style (though he derided the Swiss who thought her "immoral"), could inquire, "What is French literature, for most readers in Europe, without George Sand or M. de Balzac?" But Stendhal was an exception where her style was concerned. Even Thackeray, who lived for some years in Paris, and who urged

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"Mrs. Sand" to abandon her messianic pretensions, lauded her style.[9]

Such was George Sand's fame that she was soon visited by curious foreigners as if she were another Parisian monument. Most of them were surprised to find a proud, taciturn, unaffected woman, instead of the eloquent virago and transvestite exhibitionist they expected, and probably she enjoyed their surprise. Heinrich Heine was a personal friend, but some of the Germans were supposed to be particularly tiresome, because they begged to be admitted and afterwards wrote at length about the "scarlet woman." One well-known correspondent, Karl Gutzkow, could be found snooping around the building where she lived.

George Sand's reputation probably reached its height in the 1830s, '40s, and early '50s. In remote Yorkshire vicarages, in Mayfair salons, in the drawing rooms of Boston or Berlin and the studies of Saint Petersburg, her novels brought a breath of liberating air. Literature then offered more than an aesthetic pleasure: it was the agreeable bearer of dreams and ideas to those who were otherwise cut off from the mainstream by egotistic, tyrannical fathers or inconsiderate husbands, by constricting social forms or repressive governments.

"The time was when Madame Sand's novels were translated as fast as they appeared", wrote Henry James, thinking of the New England circle which embraced Emerson and Margaret Fuller, "and circulated, half surreptitiously, as works delightful and intoxicating, but scandalous, dangerous and seditious. To read George Sand in America was to be a socialist, a transcendentalist, and an abolitionist." It was from George Sand, as the visionary incarnation of the modern spirit, and particularly from *La Comtesse de Rudolstadt*, the sequel to *Consuelo*, of which he never tired, that Walt Whitman derived much of his stance as the inspired poet who spoke for democracy and for humanity at large, women as well as men.[10]

In Russia, where the authorities permitted the circulation of novels, while forbidding all else, George Sand's levelling and humanitarian ideals and her sense of the artist's social mission inflamed many hearts. As far as Dostoevsky could remember, she occupied the first place among the new European writers, taking precedence over Dickens and Balzac in the taste of the Russian public. She brought hope where there was despair and darkness. And not only Dostoevsky, but the critics Belinsky and Botkin, the publicist Herzen, the arch-romantic revolutionary Bakunin, as well as Turgenev, were among those profoundly touched by her.

WHAT AN INSIGHT the admiration of George Sand's writings can give into the hearts and minds of the readers she subdued! What delusions about the claims of passion, what dreams of self-sacrifice, what yearnings for fairness between the sexes, what longings for liberty and life took possession of advanced, liberal-minded men as well as of ladies who at first glance seemed so meekly to recline upon their chaises-longues! Lonely women sought for guardian spirits or kindred souls, like those in her books. The neglected Mrs Carlyle called the fervid Sandian novelist, Geraldine Jewsbury, "her Consuelo."[11] Secret revolt and the ambition to emulate the artistic self-expression and vital self-realisation of the French authoress stirred in aspiring female writers. In such an atmosphere, where public forms differed vastly from private reverie, George Sand certainly wrought a good deal of well-documented havoc among the more weak-minded of her sex, but to the strong-minded she imparted the courage to find their own voice.

EVIDENTLY, ADMIRATION FOR George Sand would not have been compatible with a conservative or reactionary stance. Among the English women writers of repute who were stimulated by her, both Charlotte Brontë and Mary Ann Evans (before her appearance as George Eliot) betrayed emotional revolutionary leanings. Charlotte Brontë was attracted to the early enlarging and life-enhancing element in revolution, rather than to revolution itself; while Mary Ann Evans thrilled to reports of fraternal scenes on the barricades in 1848, although she felt the brutal English working classes lacked the true revolutionary ardour of the French, and she settled for the English as slow crawlers. Both writers were—with Sand—firmly on the side of humanitarian social improvement (Charlotte Brontë, for instance, placed George Sand's works in the library of the radical-minded Hunsden in *The Professor*).

[9] V. del Litto, "Stendhal et George Sand", *Hommage à George Sand* (ed. Cellier, 1969), p. 17. William Makepeace Thackeray, "Madame Sand and the New Apocalypse" (1840), *Paris Sketch Book* (1866), pp. 303–9, 322, 331.

[10] Henry James, "George Sand's *Mademoiselle Merquem*", in *The Nation*, 16 July 1868, *Literary Reviews and Essays*, p. 122. For Walt Whitman's unacknowledged debt to George Sand, see Esther Shephard, *Walt Whitman's Pose* (1938).

[11] James Anthony Froude, *My Relations with Carlyle* (1903), p. 21; see also Susan Howe, *Geraldine Jewsbury* (1935). For George Sand's shattering effect on Russian ladies, see Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts* (1968), vols. 2 & 3; and E. H. Carr, *The Romantic Exiles* (1933).

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For the most part, though, the leading English women writers of the age did not linger long over George Sand's politics or even her reputed moral shortcomings. They pressed on to matters of more serious personal concern to themselves. Both Miss Brontë and Miss Barrett glimpsed a wider, freer sphere than that in which they, as women and as women writers, were expected to move, the former being very sadly conscious of her limited experience, the latter enjoying some colour in life during her days as a "prisoner" in Wimpole Street, through the pages of such "immortal improprieties" as Balzac and George Sand. Significantly, neither Charlotte Brontë nor Elizabeth Barrett Browning cared much for Jane Austen, because they found her characters lacking in soul, her air too thin, her range too restricted. From the correspondence about the relative merits of Jane Austen and George Sand in which Charlotte Brontë and George Henry Lewes became engaged, it seems plain that a whole social as well as aesthetic outlook is involved. (Personally acquainted with George Sand, author of several articles about her, and borrower of some of her novelistic themes, the future biographer of Goethe played here a somewhat equivocal role as an early Jane-ite).

What Charlotte Brontë missed in Jane Austen's novels was, among other things, fresh air (the description of landscape and mood at which George Sand was so successful).

> "Now I can understand admiration of George Sand [she wrote to Lewes], for though I never saw any of her works which I admired throughout (even *Consuelo*, which is the best, or the best that I have read, appears to me to couple strange extravagance with wondrous excellence), yet she has a grasp of mind, which, if I cannot fully comprehend, I can very deeply respect; she is sagacious and profound;—Miss Austen is only shrewd and observant."

In Charlotte Brontë's opinion, Jane Austen lacked poetry, too: "Can there be a great artist without poetry? . . . It is *poetry* as I comprehend the word, which elevates that masculine George Sand, and makes out of something coarse, something Godlike."[12] Moreover, she told another, Jane Austen was acquainted neither with the passions nor with metaphysical concerns—a charge which could scarcely be levelled at George Sand. Indeed, Charlotte Brontë's criticism of Jane Austen seems largely to be formulated in terms of some of the French novelist's chief characteristics.

Intellect and imagination; poetry and passion; inner feeling rather than outward manners; openness, vehemence and power rather than elegance—these were the large qualities that Charlotte Brontë admired in George Sand. It was from the excess of Sand's qualities that her defects arose. "Fantastic, fanatical, unpractical enthusiast as she often is—far from truthful as are many of her views of life—misled, as she is apt to be by her feelings—George Sand has a better nature than M. de Balzac; her brain is larger, her heart warmer than his . . . ," she told Lewes after they had met in London. Although literature may not be made of good sentiments (as George Sand too rarely realised), at one level heart must speak to heart. Lewes would report on his encounter with the plain, retiring Currer Bell: "Yet what passion, what fire in her! Quite as much as in George Sand, only the clothing is less voluptuous."[13] There was indeed a time when Jane Eyre and, by implication, her creator, stood condemned (like Sand herself) for pride and the spirit of revolt and independence which fostered revolution. Jane Eyre's passionate claim to equality of sensibility and soul with Rochester was considered by some critics to be profoundly subversive, and one of them did not hesitate to call Currer Bell a great revolutionary.

GEORGE ELIOT WOULD have none of this. She was scathing about self-sacrifice for so low a cause as "that of a diabolical law which chains a man soul and body to a putrefying carcase", and contemptuous of Jane Eyre's refusal to become Rochester's mistress.[14] As Mary Ann Evans, she had read a considerable number of George Sand's works, which greatly delighted and moved her. She advised friends, who evidently did not share her enthusiasm, to be sparing of blasphemies against her "divinity." Not only tales which deal with religious doubt and spiritual torment, but autobiographical works or a novel like *Jacques* which treats of the problem of freedom in marriage, aroused her admiration. In connection with *Jacques* she wrote an impassioned defence of George Sand, where she distinguished between the opinions or conduct of writers who had profoundly influenced her and their power to act as a spur to her own intellect and imagination.

HERE, INTERESTINGLY, George Sand is placed in the same enlarging category as her master, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose confessions first moved Miss Evans to think deeply about life.

[12] Charlotte Brontë, Letters to G. H. Lewes of 12 and 18 January 1848, in Elizabeth Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1857; Everyman, ed. 1908), pp. 240–1.

[13] George Eliot (Letter 5 March 1853) in *Letters* (ed. Haight, 1956), vol. 2, p. 91.

[14] Gordon S. Haight, *George Eliot* (1968), pp. 65, 145–6. For the contemporary view of Charlotte Brontë as revolutionary, see Inga-Stina Ewbank, *Their Proper Sphere* (1966), pp. 32–3.

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Through the "electric thrill" of Rousseau, she found herself capable of formulating ideas which she had previously only dimly glimpsed. "It is thus with George Sand", she assured Sara Hennell in a barely punctuated outburst.

> "I should never dream of going to her writings as a moral code. . . . I don't care whether I agree with her about marriage or not—whether I think the design of her plot correct or that she had no precise design at all but began to write as the spirit moved her and trusted to Providence for the catastrophe, which I think the more probable case—it is sufficient for me as a reason for bowing before her in eternal gratitude to that 'great power of God' manifested in her—that I cannot read six pages of hers without feeling it is given to her to delineate human passion and its results—(and I must say in spite of your judgment) some of the moral instincts and their tendencies—with such truthfulness such nicety of discrimination such tragic power and withal such loving gentle humour that one might live a century with nothing but one's own dull faculties and not know as much as those six pages will suggest."[15]

The grateful enthusiastic flow of this defence of George Sand, regardless of her tendency to improvise—and the telling allusion to the French novelist's humour betrays submission to her winning ways—carries even fewer qualifications than Charlotte Brontë's.

The fact that this defence was stimulated by *Jacques* suggests that Mary Ann Evans may well have been more deeply stirred by George Sand's views on marriage than she was prepared to admit to Sara Hennell. "I don't care whether I agree with her about marriage or not" sounds defiant as well as slightly ambiguous in the light of what follows: "The psychological anatomy of Jacques and Fernande in the early days of their marriage seems quite preternaturally true—I mean that her power of describing it is preternatural. Fernande and Jacques are merely the masculine and feminine nature and their early married life an everyday tragedy. . . ." This is said of a husband who is sufficiently extraordinary to grant his wife complete freedom, should she fall in love with another (which she promptly does), and rare enough to define adultery not as the hour a wife spends with her lover, but as the night she spends with her husband afterwards. It looks as if the ground for Miss Evans's departure for the continent with G. H. Lewes (who had long condoned his wife's adultery)—not only the Sandian will-to-live but also the Sandian self-sacrifice for passion which Jane Eyre failed to make—had been well prepared in the literature she admired.

OF THE LEADING mid-19th-century women writers, however, quite the most ardent devotee of George Sand was Elizabeth Barrett. In 1844, Miss Barrett addressed two sonnets to George Sand, both characterised by her intense, bizarre imagery. In these sonnets, she aspired to draw the feminine-masculine George Sand upwards to the rank of stainless angel or sexless spirit. When George Sand saw a translation of the verses alluding to the roaring lions of her tumultuous senses, she was highly amused. Miss Barrett declared: ". . . if Madame Dudevant is not the first female genius of any country or age, I really do not know who is. And then she has certain noblenesses—granting all the evil and 'perilous stuff'—noblenesses and royalnesses which make me loyal." From this position she rarely wavered, except to express mild distaste for "Ledru Rollin's *confidante* and councillor" of 1848.[16]

Of Mrs Browning's long poem, *Aurora Leigh*, a contemporary would say, "It is only a novel *à la* Jane Eyre, a little tainted by Sand. . . ."[17] The heroine was thought to be called Aurora after Aurore Dudevant, while traces of *Consuelo* could be found in the plot. If Mrs Browning was predisposed to plunder George Sand and other French novelists as a result of her voracious reading, she was also predisposed to sympathise, to some degree, at least, with George Sand's radical stance, by her own loathing for class privileges and the West Indian slavery upon which her family's position was built. Like Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot, she detested the double standard that was applied to the conduct of men and women, and she spoke out against it.

A hint of yearning for George Sand's role as poetico-socio-political high priestess pierces occasionally through Mrs Browning's vivacious letters. Even if facetiously expressed, it seems present in the exclamation, "Then, *I* might have passed a little for a prophetess as well as George Sand!" Mrs Browning's notorious "poetic" adoration of Prince Louis Napoleon, an aspect of her "immoral sympathy with power", led her in imagination to try to emulate George Sand, whom she had finally succeeded in meeting in Paris at a time when the former revolutionary propagandist was tirelessly interceding for the victims of the repression which followed his *coup d'état*. As late as April 1857, Mrs Browning could be found sketching a letter to Napoleon the Little, an appeal on behalf of the vociferous exile, Victor Hugo, in which her Sandian role-playing seems evident. This letter was never sent. All the same,

[15] George Eliot, 9 February 1849, *Letters*, vol. 1, pp. 277–8.
[16] Elizabeth Barrett, *The Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning* (ed. Kenyon, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 233, 425.
[17] Alethea Hayter, *Mrs. Browning* (1962), p. 159.

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Mrs Browning did play no small part as a Sandian Muse in the cause of the liberation of Italy.

MEN LAGGED WELL BEHIND their womenfolk in admiration of George Sand. Robert Browning fluctuated: he admitted to being familiar with the French writer's early works, and his wife managed to report his "enthusiasm" occasionally to her friends; but after her death, he would declare that he generally hated George Sand's later writings. During his epistolary courtship of Miss Barrett, it did not take long before they came to the heart of the matter: the relative intellectual faculties of the sexes.

Soon, the learned Miss Barrett was confiding to him that "there *is* a natural inferiority of mind in woman—of the intellect . . . not by any means of the moral nature" (the notion of the moral superiority of woman as counterbalance to her intellectual inferiority then being widely current). However, Miss Barrett noted a single exception in history: "that wonderful woman George Sand; who has something monstrous in combination with her genius, there is no denying at moments. . . . Such a colossal nature in every way. . . ." To this encomium (despite its conventional stress on the woman of intellect as freak), Robert Browning replied that he would be writing to her about George Sand and the vexed question of the mental abilities of the sexes—but he did not do so.

Instead, a few weeks later (August 1845), he informed Miss Barrett that *Consuelo* bored him. As a novel (with the exception of the first part) it appeared to the disappointed dramatist to be too long, too easy—and false. Then came the sting: *Consuelo* was

> "a *woman's* book, in its merits and defects—and supremely timid in all the points where one wants, and has a right to expect, some *fruit* of all the pretence and George Sand*ism*. There are occasions when one does say, in the phrase of her school, 'que la Femme parle!' . . . So I am not George Sand's—she teaches me nothing—I look to her for nothing."

At first, Miss Barrett seemed to bow before this unexpected storm, though she insisted that George Sand was greater than *Consuelo*, and "not to be depreciated according to the defects of that book, nor classified as 'femme qui parle'. . ."[18] She followed this with a nice touch of irony, pointing out that want of logic, "rarest of phenomena" in men, should be regarded as a human rather than a feminine deficiency. But she does not seem to have drawn the conclusion here that want of intellect might be similarly regarded. It was then very difficult (and sometimes still is) for people to escape from preconceptions about masculine and feminine roles which George Sand had contrived to upset.

EVEN MORE FORTHRIGHT THAN Browning on the subject of George Sand was his friend and mentor Thomas Carlyle: "In the world there are few sadder, sicklier phenomena for me than George Sand and the response she meets with." He noted

> "a new Phallus worship, with Sue, Balzac and Co. for prophets, and Madame Sand for a virgin."[19]

Carlyle's aggressive phraseology betrays a curious insistence upon the sexual aspect. There were disagreements with Mrs Carlyle, Mazzini's friend and a timid admirer of George Sand, on "sick sentimentalism":

> "It is this [Carlyle wrote to his wife] which makes me so impatient of George Sand, Mazzini and all that set of prophets—impatient so often to be unjust to what of truth and genuine propriety of aim is in them. It is not by arguing that I can ever hope to do you any service on that side."[20]

From these words, despite what Emerson characterised as Carlyle's lack of charity towards George Sand's high qualities, we may deduce that the author of *The French Revolution* could see some element of "truth and propriety of aim" in George Sand and the exiled Mazzini (who, until they differed, served as her principal advocate and intermediary in England). Indeed, Carlyle would later acknowledge to Browning a certain degree of submission to the music of "this sublime Highpriestess of Anarchy": "After all, I participate in your liking for the melody that runs through that strange 'beautiful incontinent' soul —a *Modern* Magdalen, with the 'seven devils' mostly still in her!"[21] It seems hardly likely, though, that Carlyle could ever find in himself any real sympathy for George Sand, when he was tactless enough to preach the virtue of obedience to such victims of Tsarist tyranny as Herzen and Turgenev, and imperceptive enough to tell his gifted and aggrieved wife that a woman's purpose in life is to look for a man-and-superior whom she should obey and of whom she should try to make herself a beautiful reflection.

PERSISTENT WOMANISERS of a certain type, no less than a variety of the undersexed, rarely found much to their liking in the author of *Lélia*. From Baudelaire (who disliked her lack of a sense of

[18] *The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning 1845-1846* (1899), vol. 1, pp. 116–117, 162–4, 165.

[19] James Anthony Froude, *Thomas Carlyle* (1882–4), vol. 3, p. 208.

[20] Thomas Carlyle, *New Letters of Thomas Carlyle* (ed. Alexander Carlyle, 1904), vol. 1, p. 264.

[21] Thomas Carlyle to Robert Browning (10 October 1851), in *Letters of Thomas Carlyle to Mill, Sterling and Browning* (ed. Carlyle, 1923), p. 287.

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sin) to Tolstoy, revulsion was loudly proclaimed. In order to annoy Turgenev, whose respect for George Sand was well known, Tolstoy made insulting remarks about her at a dinner, declaring that, had her heroines existed, it would have been necessary "to lash them to the hangman's cart and drag them through the streets of Saint Petersburg."[22] One can scarcely suppose that Tolstoy's "moral" indignation, any more than Baudelaire's "metaphysical" wrath, should be taken at their face value. Some deeper, more private and visceral loathing is suggested, of a sort which may still be fairly common.

In this regard, the most profoundly influential hostile assessment of George Sand, both cultural and political in character, was offered by Nietzsche, who chose to present her as the comic and copious "milk cow with 'a beautiful style' ", symbol of everything he hated in romanticism—its "feminine" spirit, its lack of restraint, its sentimental altruism, its democratic ideals.[23] Just as, for some, George Sand might figure as the redemptive Eternal Feminine, so for Nietzsche she stood as its hateful and destructive incarnation, ruin of the virile, aristocratic élite. In either case, George Sand the human creature tended to vanish behind the mother-goddess or the man-eating virago.

WHAT HAPPENED TO BRING ABOUT George Sand's mighty fall and disappearance from the centre of the stage? In 1897, Henry James (in his *Notes on Novelists*) could inquire, "Is she still read?" For the art of fiction had become less obviously personal, less discursive and operatic. Besides, the mood had changed, and the nature of her commitment seemed outmoded. The urge to embellish in order to console and uplift had been replaced by aestheticism and the cult of perversion or "decadence." Despair had grown—and later, as the result of savage 20th-century experiences, would remain—the only acceptable mode for many. George Sand herself had known moments of near-suicidal despair but, as Whitman perceived, she mostly belonged with artistic personalities who, in spite of repeated failures, try never to lose sight of unattainable perfection and good. Can such an attitude of determined hopefulness about humanity ever become rationally acceptable again?

Working against her, in the years immediately before and after the First World War, was (as we have seen) Nietzschean anti-feminism and its concomitants, which were then widespread. As for the feminist movement itself, to which obliquely she contributed much, but in which she did not want to participate, it grew increasingly concerned with political suffrage and economic wages. Meanwhile, more had become known about George Sand's private life, and the somewhat sordid aspects of it failed to tally with the purity of motive she had so consistently proclaimed. Worse still, it was found that she had tampered on occasion with the evidence of certain letters, either because she could not help romancing, or in order to keep the *beau rôle* for herself. These revelations, instead of prompting inquiry, gave the final push to an already precarious monument.

NOWHERE CAN THE GRAPH of George Sand's later reputation be traced so clearly as in the seven critical articles that Henry James devoted to her. The young James of 1868 (though he alludes briefly to her superior mind) wastes little time on her pretensions to philosophical thought, her religious doubts and musings, her quest for political and social justice—indeed, all that side of her work which had proved so compelling to some of his compatriots and to struggling Germans, Poles or Russians. Nor in the beginning is he very interested in her life story. It is the literary aspect, her "vast imaginative and descriptive powers", the style and narrative art of the "magician" that he lauds. Then came the personal revelations: where previously he had thought she was never vulgar, he now (in 1899) considered her vulgar to the point of the grotesque: "so much experience reduced only to the terms of so many more or less greasy males"—a phrase which doubtless reveals more about James than about Sand.[24] Her fecundity, her fluidity, above all, her fluency still impressed him—and perhaps secretly aroused a little envy as he groped gingerly for the *mot juste*—but the life and the living of it now predominated (as henceforward they would predominate in any treatment of George Sand, outside academic discussion).[25]

Moreover, her life provided a splendid opportunity for James to exercise his irony and his comic sense, and he had a fine time with it. George Sand came to embody one aspect of his literary antithesis: she stood for Life, whereas

[22] Henri Troyat, *Tolstoy* (tr. Amphoux, 1968), p. 131. Compare Leo Tolstoy, "Introduction to the Works of Guy de Maupassant" (1894) in *What is Art? and Essays on Art* (1929), p. 23.

[23] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* (1889) in *The Portable Nietzsche* (ed. Kaufmann, 1968), p. 513. See also R. P. Rosenberg, "Nietzsche and George Sand", *The Germanic Review* (October 1935), p. 260ff.

[24] Henry James, *Literary Reviews and Essays*, pp. 123–4, 126–7. Henry James, "George Sand" (1899) in *Notes on Novelists*, p. 166. Compare "Last Gleanings from George Sand's Writings" (1878), in *Literary Reviews and Essays*, p. 128.

[25] For the most recent biography, see Curtis Cate, *George Sand*, (Hamish Hamilton, 1975).

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he chose Art which necessitated detachment from life. She never sought to immure herself in that lofty tower of art in which he aimed to be locked inviolate. Perhaps the disastrous effect of biographical revelations upon her literary fame helped to contribute to his own decision to burn his papers and leave instructions that no biography should be written about himself. A lingering warmth of feeling towards the woman whose play in translation had possibly launched him on his literary and would-be dramatic career, remained none the less. Travelling in style through France with Edith Wharton in 1907, he stopped to visit Nohant: ". . . what a mighty and marvellous George!" he could later still exclaim with relish.[26]

IT WAS LEFT TO PROUST to embalm the ambivalent response. As a boy, he had loved George Sand's pastoral novels, and he made one of them the cornerstone of his aesthetic edifice. Her prose was at once prompter of memories, witness to the rare goodness and moral elegance of the narrator's beloved self-sacrificing mother and grandmother (both keen Sandians), supposed source of the grandmother's illness and of the narrator's own decline in health and loss of will, and possibly even of his determination to pursue the art of literature. At the same time, Proust could tell a friend who was apparently surprised at the responsible position being allotted to George Sand in the work's (moral) architecture: "Do not imagine that I care for George Sand. The passage is not literary criticism. . . ."[27] The rest of the book would correct the impression, he added. This it does only in part, and certainly not where the twin pillars of goodness and self-abnegation are concerned. It seems almost as if, to acknowledge any pleasure in George Sand, or any debt to her, could be a sign of poor taste and a source of embarrassment. Something of this endures.

STILL, THE TESTIMONY of her international admirers and debtors remains impressive. Their testimony may not ultimately prove anything about her intrinsic merit, yet the quality as well as the quantity of those admirers—and, indeed, the stature of her detractors who thought she was worth taking seriously—should surely give us pause and invite us to look again.

Admittedly, her faults were many, as even her warmest admirers sometimes allowed. She lacked self-criticism, or rather, the ability to do anything about her own artistic shortcomings (for she was aware of them). She was frank, but not always strictly honest—a defect which some of her masculine critics like to consider particularly feminine. And she could be irresponsible: there was a period when she could incite to bloodshed.[28] What could be more modern than the lack of a sense of sin, the denial of hell, the boundless tolerance and benevolence which lead imperceptibly to revolutionary violence? It is not only in this phase, but also in the total impact of her challenging role, that she still has much to say to her unknowing emulators, as well as to those who would probe their motives.

Whatever her faults, her decline was also due in part to cultural politics, to the anti-romantic, anti-egalitarian, anti-feminist movements of opinion. Perhaps, in the current general reappraisal of the 19th century, George Sand the great dreamer, Byron's female counterpart, that is, something rather less and more than a purely literary figure, will be the last to be restored to her true place as Janus-like muse and goad, precursor and witness.

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[26] Leon Edel, *Henry James: The Master* (1972), p. 351.

[27] Marcel Proust, Letter to Georges de Lauris, November–December 1909, *Choix de lettres* (ed. Kolb, 1965), p. 169. Also *A la Recherche du temps perdu* (Pléiade, ed. 1954), vol. I, pp. 39, 43; vol. III, pp. 14, 35, 883–8, 1044; *Contre Sainte-Beuve* (Collection Idées, 1965), p. 143.

[28] For George Sand's flirtation with violence, see my *Writers and Revolution* (1974); also Ferdinand Mount's remarks in his "The Writer as Revolutionary", ENCOUNTER, November 1975.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Hailsham's Solution

By Max Beloff

FOR SOMEONE wishing to address the nation on a subject of importance the BBC's annual Richard Dimbleby Lecture seemingly provides a very suitable occasion. The distinguished audience at the recording; the prime time allocation on television; the association with a much admired and much loved hero of the medium—what more could one ask? And yet as I watched Lord Hailsham (an old friend and colleague for whom I have much respect and admiration) on the screen and thought what impact his obviously carefully prepared and measured words might be having on others watching on thousands of other screens, I had the feeling that a great opportunity was somehow being allowed to escape. What Hailsham was saying was clearly all too true. No one suggests that Britain's governmental system works well or commands confidence. No one denies that its classical outlines are being distorted. Yet the explanation of why this should be so seemed largely lacking, and the proposed remedies not very closely related to the ailment that Hailsham had diagnosed.

If it is true that the main problem is that we have come to live under "an elective dictatorship" (the title of the lecture) and if that meant that Parliament (itself under executive control) could legislate at will—however small the government's majority, and however far it was from evoking a consensus—then it is hard to see how a "written Constitution" including a "Bill of Rights" could substantially alter the situation even if the constitutional-legal problems of "entrenchment" could be solved. After all, whatever may be the case in the future, what people complain about today is not primarily an invasion of the kind of rights that "Bills of Rights" exist to protect; arbitrary arrest, the denial of freedom of speech, religious persecution—these are not as yet features of the British way of life. Where such problems do exist (for instance, with respect to the status of immigrant communities), they are the result of clashes between rights of different kinds—the combination of sensitivity to racial fears with respect for freedom of speech, the offering of equal opportunities with the need for positive action to help the less fortunate. And in so far as these are matters for legal protection, and in so far as British law is at present inadequate for the purpose, there is after all—as Hailsham reminded us—the European Convention on Human Rights and its enforcement machinery.

What Hailsham is worried about is the kind of legislation on economic and social questions that Parliament may now be forcing through at the behest of Cabinets without the opportunity to control its content or monitor its enforcement. To this, as he himself admits, the Bill of Rights solution *alone* would provide little remedy. Other possible remedies, *e.g.*, electoral reform, making Cabinet control over a more diverse House of Commons more difficult to envisage, Hailsham dismisses on the basis of analogies with experience elsewhere which I find rather less convincing than he does. *Federalism*, another way in which the powers of government may be divided and hence weakened, Hailsham considers and would in some form incorporate in his new constitution. But as he admits, regional sentiment in the English regions does not seem very powerful; and no Federation in which the four units were England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland would seem to make much sense in view of the much greater size of the English element. We are left with *Bicameralism*—a reformed and elective Upper House which could receive greater powers than the House of Lords now possesses because it would not suffer from the stigma of being unrepresentative. Yet here too there are obvious weaknesses. If the Upper House is to be elected on a different system, giving weight to regions rather than the existing constituencies, it might have a different party complexion from the Lower House, as has happened in West Germany or Australia. In that case, since it cannot displace governments, what can it do but obstruct them? And will a mere weakening of government remove the sense of living under an "elective dictatorship"? Deadlock can be also undesirable.

I MYSELF THINK THAT Hailsham got nearer a true diagnosis of the problem when he referred to the

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"new and to my mind wholly unconstitutional doctrines of mandate and manifesto. . . ." When he said that (some third of the way through), I really thought he was going to get to grips with the real issue. But, in the end, after explaining why it was dangerous that governments should come into office tied by pledges to their most active but by no means best-informed supporters, he did not press home the argument where it truly leads.

I feel that the reason may have been inherent in the nature of the Dimbleby Lecture. It cannot be a party-political occasion; there in the front row of the invited guests was the new Labour Home Secretary; and that was obviously interpreted by Hailsham as requiring him to make his best efforts to disentangle his theme from its party implications. He therefore talked as though the danger of a move towards "totalitarianism" from which we needed protection came equally from Left and from Right. This may be true of some other countries. It is not true of Britain, and Hailsham, a loyal member of his own party, knows this as well as anyone. It is not even true that the first step, Hailsham's "elective dictatorship" is an equal menace under either party. What would Mrs Margaret Thatcher's "mandate" be? And what militant forces would make her cling to it against her better judgment?

On the contrary, many people would say that one of Britain's most obvious weaknesses is not that we have an "elective dictatorship", that government is too strong, but that most of the time it is just too weak. No doubt a Conservative government could use a House of Commons majority to pass into law anything it chose—but could it get the laws obeyed? Many people seem to think not. Observing the British political scene one might think more of the anarchy of Stephen than of the undoubted strength, perhaps overweening strength, of Henry II. What we have is the paradoxical situation that we don't know whether we are subject to too much centralised power or the victims of near-anarchy, at best a kind of neo-feudalism.

I WISH, THEREFORE, that Hailsham's warning that our constitutional system is undergoing enormous strain had been uttered on another less inhibiting occasion, on the hustings not in the studio, as a challenge not as a tribute. If he had come in front of us "unmuzzled" (in the Gladstonian phrase) would he not have said something more like this?

"The reason why the British constitution is under strain is that Parliamentary sovereignty, the key element in the constitution, can only function if all sides show restraint as to how far they carry passing advantages. This can only be done so long as all political parties not only accept certain broad areas of agreement but also abjure the use of non-Parliamentary, non-electoral means of exercising power. The constitution could cope with Whigs and Tories, with Liberals and Conservatives. It cannot cope with what the Labour Party has now become. The Labour Party—as Mr Michael Foot and Mr Tony Benn proclaim, and as most of the so-called moderates and "social democrats" tacitly accept—is not just another political party. It is the political wing of the Labour movement, and that movement which began by seeking legitimate redress for the underprivileged has now become an instrument for reshaping society on the socialist-collectivist model whether by parliamentary or more direct means as occasion dictates. If Labour has a majority, Parliament's sovereignty is regarded as legitimate. If Labour is rejected by the electorate as it was in 1970, then the other wing takes over; Labour politicians move on to the sidelines to cheer on the advance-guard, the organised power of trade unionism. So long as the Labour Party and the Unions (in so far as a distinction can be drawn between them) are led, as they now are, by men who do not accept the constitution except where it works in their favour, whose purpose is to make shifts in power *'irreversible'*, no constitutional remedies would seem to be sufficient."

LET HAILSHAM GO BACK to the Bill of Rights element in his proposed constitution. Can he seriously believe that a Constitutional Convention in which the Labour Party was strongly represented would give relief from the tyranny of the Closed Shop or that if it did, the Bill of Rights would be respected? And yet deprivation of the right to earn one's living at the behest of non-elected authorities would seem the very definition of tyranny.

Hailsham's rejection of electoral reform comes from the belief (correct or not) that its introduction would tend to allow extremist parties, the Communists or the racialist National Front, to get a foothold in Parliament from which the present system excludes them; and that this would be bad in itself. It is by no means self-evident that this would be bad. Might it not be less dangerous if open opponents of a free society and Parliamentary government had to expose themselves to political conflict in full view of the electorate rather than penetrating the Labour movement and doing their work of subversion unobserved? Hailsham argues that the electoral system helps the centre in each big party. But is that a sufficient safeguard if the "moderates"—when it comes to the point—never stand

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up to the "extremists"? And isn't it so that they do not stand up to them—not because of cowardice, or personal weaknesses but because, fundamentally, they share the same philosophy and belong to a single movement inspired by it?

Constitutions reflect the alignment of social forces and these in turn are mobilised by social ideas. All of Lord Hailsham's remedies (as well as electoral reform) will be repudiated by socialists—as Michael Foot did within days of their being given voice. The making of Constitutions and reflections upon them have never been "non-party" matters, and Quintin Hogg (as he once was) knows as well as anyone that this is the case. One must hope that he will lend his great authority to spelling out the present-day implications of this irrefutable fact, perhaps on other and less august occasions.

Some New Abuses of Literacy

Paris Letter—By Eugène Ionesco

What is the purpose of language? To enable one to express one's thoughts and possibly one's conception of the universe—whence philosophy. To give one a theoretical and practical understanding of necessity—whence science. To enable one to express emotion and feeling—whence art and literature. To give and receive useful instructions, we have practical language: "Watch out, it's burning!" or "Pass me the cheese...." In art and literature, lying is impossible, since it is self-revelatory. In practical everyday life it would be inconvenient to say "Bring me a chair" if one wanted a glass of water.

In political propaganda, at every level, language is used to conceal the truth, to trick and to gull. So one is axiomatically a liar when one is "politicised"—when one is involved in propaganda, advertising, and political journalism. To de-mystify ideological and political language is a titanic undertaking, an impossible task. And the problem is all the more complicated because many of those who claim to be *démystificateurs* do everything in their power to mystify us. They mystify us even when they are attempting to define de-mystification.

For instance, we read in a serious dictionary that "de-mystification" is a synonym for "de-mythification", simply because one of the editors of this dictionary seems to believe, perhaps genuinely, that "myth" is "lying"; and this allows him to change, falsely, the meaning of the term. Even if myth *were* lying, which is debatable, there are (there would be) other lies besides myth.

In the practice of politics and in journalism, language is booby-trapped. In fact it has become quite natural and instinctive for it to be so. One even finds oneself being honestly misleading, doubtless because everyone is contaminated by the disease.

For instance, I recently read in a daily paper, which is on the whole more objective than most of the others, this headline about the opening of the summit meeting of the non-aligned countries:

> Face to Face with the Rich Countries, a Divided Third World

This might give the impression that there is a compact, monolithic block of united "rich" countries opposed to a divided Third World. In a speech by the representative of one of these Third World countries, we learn that

> in the Lebanon, the people and the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians expelled from their homeland are the victims of a veritable campaign of extermination.

It is, alas, true that men are fighting to exterminate one another in that country. But when we are told that the Palestinians there have been driven out of their homeland, I find myself wondering where the Palestinians' homeland is. In Lebanon? in Israel? in Jordan? Because are not the other "Palestinians", that is to say the inhabitants of the whole of former Palestine, also in their homeland? And are not the Lebanese Christians in their homeland?

For "the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians" came to Lebanon recently and were, I am told, accepted by the Lebanese. The Lebanese in

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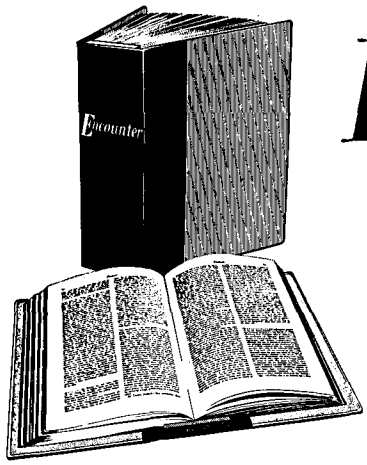
their homeland allowed these Palestinians, who arrived in ever-increasing numbers, to live quietly and peacefully. But we know that these Palestinians did not remain quiet and peaceful. They wanted to lay their hands on the whole of Lebanon, bringing disorder into the country and winning over a large section of the Lebanese Muslims who had hitherto lived on good terms with the Lebanese Christians. They built impregnable fortifications which, however, were captured, for instance at Tel el Zatar. They wanted to make Lebanon a base for operations against Israel; they also wanted to promote "the Revolution" in all the Arab countries.

The Palestinian leaders, known or clandestine, claim to want to provide a homeland for people who are without one, which is understandable; but in reality it is "world revolution" that they are aiming at, first and foremost. Hence the existence among the leaders of this movement of Christians, Marxists, Trotskyists, Japanese Shintoists, and God-knows-what-all—a mysterious international network.

Realising that life with the Muslims is no longer possible, the non-Muslim Lebanese want to carve out a territory in which they can live at peace and they want to get rid of the undesirable newcomers not from the whole of Lebanon but from their own territory, their essential *Lebensraum*. Because the truth of the matter is this: it was the Palestinians who began to make war on the Lebanese once they established themselves in Lebanon. No one could have been more conciliatory than the Lebanese were. And yet they are reviled, because of a particular ideological use of language. Once it was decreed that the Palestinians were Left-wing, it was also decreed that the Muslims were Left-wing. And all those who resisted them because their existence was threatened were naturally conservatives, right-wingers, fascists, and otherwise disreputable characters. By the same token, the term "Islamo-progressive" was invented. How can one be at the same time progressive and an adherent of Islam?

The most profound virtue of the Muslim religion is that it is not progressive but immutable—what is today usually called "reactionary." Muslim thought is infinitely worthy of respect; but it is not, it cannot be, "progressive." Besides, what does "progressive" mean? It is a word as empty of meaning as *liberté* (since no revolution has ever succeeded in creating liberty) or *justice* (which, de-mystified, means punishment or vengeance).

I RECENTLY SAW on French television protagonists from both camps in Lebanon. When a Christian



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came on to the screen he was labelled "*extrême droite*." And naturally, members of the other camp were labelled "*gauche*." And yet, among the "leftists" in the Lebanon there are Arabs of extreme wealth, indeed feudal lords. In other words, the situation is a great deal more complex. I don't know whether there are "conservatives" among the Lebanese Christians; but, above all, there are liberals. Lebanon was a liberal country, and it was liberalism that was the country's undoing, a liberalism far removed from fascism whether green, red, or brown. And yet even today I see in another daily paper a headline saying:

RIGHT-WING FORCES ATTACKING PALESTINO-PROGRESSIVE STRONGHOLDS

No one ever points out in Paris how well the so-called "right-wing Christian conservatives" speak French. It isn't at all surprising; their culture and outlook are French; they are French. It's a corner of France, a last corner of France, which is fighting for survival over there. Ah, yes, of course, it's the fault of the West again; they've been corrupted by colonialism! All the more reason for the Frenchmen of France to hate them—since the French hate other Frenchmen.

But I can't bring myself to hate France. I was re-reading only yesterday *Le Jeu de l'amour et du hasard*. What a terrible play, but what language and what "*style*"—that is, what a unique and marvellous way of life. I also re-read not so long ago the letters I used to receive from the old farmer's wife in the Mayenne who used to look after me as a child. She wrote as she spoke: a peasant language, but of the 17th or 18th century. But the French can rest assured: if the "Palestino-progressives" massacre or drive out the Christian Lebanese (before getting on to the Israelis) no one will speak French in those outlandish parts. French will go on being spoken in France for a little longer . . . if people don't regard it as a bourgeois and reactionary language. Hitler didn't succeed in turning France into a German country; but it may soon be a country where nothing but Russian, or Chinese, is spoken.

Luckily for us poor fools, the Africans of Senegal and Cameroun speak French and identify with French culture. I shall go and live in Senegal.

I HAVE A charming, intelligent, cultivated friend who enjoys doing a good turn. Recently, he came to pick me up in his car to take me for a drive in the country. When I got in beside him, he was even kind enough (I am very clumsy) to help me with my seat-belt. As we drove off, I glanced at the headlines in his newspaper, which is one that I don't normally read because I read the paper of which it is the smart and "*U*" thing to say: "I never read that paper." I even write occasionally for the paper which people don't read. I take good care not to write for a paper which people *do* read: it would cause me far too many headaches. Anyhow, glancing at the paper which is read by people who don't read the paper which I read, I saw:

EX-GENERAL SPINOLA RETURNS TO PORTUGAL

The paper which I read and others don't never puts "ex-General" but "General Spinola." Remarking on this to my friend, who was held up at some traffic lights, I said:

"General Spinola hasn't been cashiered, as far as I know. He may be an ex-Head of Government, but he's still a general. You see how language is booby-trapped. It may not seem very important, but to say ex-General and not General puts the general in question in an unfavourable light. You assume he's been convicted, cashiered; you might even think that he'd deserted. At any rate, it cashiers him verbally. Those silly *speakerines* on television, with their charming voices and their lovely white teeth, also say in their dulcet tones: ex-General Spinola."

"It's nothing to do with the *speakerines*", replied my friend. "They simply repeat what they're told."

"Exactly", I said. "They gracefully repeat the inanities of the media! Still, I rather love them when they announce, laughing gaily and thinking of something else, that the famine in Africa or the floods in Bengal have caused the deaths of tens of thousands of people."

"If you see tears of laughter in their eyes, it's because they do mind, after all."

"Clearly, they don't know what they're saying. It's the editors I blame."

"What do you blame them for?" asked my friend, crossing the lights on amber.

"I've told you. I blame them for saying ex-General Spinola instead of General Spinola."

"Are you a supporter of General Spinola?"

"It's not a question of whether or not one's a supporter of General Spinola. Objectivity demands that one should say General Spinola, ex-Head of State or ex-Head of Government, not ex-General. What I'm attacking is a conspiracy of language, a political conspiracy."

"One can perfectly well say of a general that he no longer has a military command, that he is a former general."

"When General de Gaulle no longer had a military command, he wasn't called ex-General de Gaulle."

"It's the custom in France, a social custom, to give people who've held an important post or rank in the administration or the army or the diplomatic corps, their old title of consul or

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general or ambassador. Not every country does it. Anyway, you see conspiracies everywhere. It's the CIA who make conspiracies."

"Perhaps, but they're not the only ones. Take the Korean War, for example. The Americans, having liberated Korea from Japanese occupation, were preparing to go home when the North Koreans, together with the Chinese and the Russians, suddenly invaded South Korea. Once attacked, the Americans had to stand their ground. It was said of the Americans that they had no business to be in Korea, that they were a long way from home. It isn't said of the Russians in the Indian Ocean, or even in Hungary, that they're a long way from home. The conspiracy of language in 1950 made it appear that although the North Koreans had been the first to attack, it was the Americans who were, strategically speaking, the aggressors, because they are imperialists. Soon the Americans were no longer strategic aggressors, they were aggressors pure and simple: *les agresseurs américains*. All sorts of 'committed' plays and books were written on the subject to drum it into people's heads that the North Koreans, having been attacked by the Americans, were defending their country, that they were resisters. . . . Ask anyone today, either the elderly who've forgotten, or the young who can't remember: who were the aggressors in the Korean war? They'll all say: *les agresseurs, c'étaient les Américains*. . . ."

"Ideologically and objectively, the Americans *were* aggressors. Objectively, and philosophically. And the question: what were the Americans doing in Korea? isn't so stupid as all that. Ultimately, Asia belongs to the Asians; one must let them sort things out for themselves."

"So, according to you, it was all right for the Russians to invade Czechoslovakia, because the Russians are Europeans. Europe for the Europeans! But what were the Americans doing in Europe in 1917–18 and during the Second World War? They ought to have left the Europeans, the Germans, French and English, to sort things out among themselves."

"The Americans intervened purely in the interests of economic and political hegemony. Just look at the crushing hold they have on us now. Anyway, Germany represented an ideology which conflicted with the European democratic and humanist tradition . . . the Western tradition."

"Is that how you saw it at the time?"

MY FRIEND HAD TO BRAKE suddenly because of a big lorry which had cut in front of us from the left, ignoring our right of way. "It's total anarchy", he said. "Far too many cars, they're the curse of our age. The horrors of the consumer society. . . ."

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The contributors to this survey are all specialists in their fields, and have provided an indispensable guide to students of the early medieval period – historians, archaeologists, philologists, geographers and others – outlining the present state of knowledge of the subject and providing convenient sources.

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"Because those bastards of Americans have lit up the streets of West Berlin and filled the shop-windows with consumer goods which can be seen from the other side and which attract some Germans like moths to a flame, or flies to honey. They're hypnotised. They come, and they get killed."

"It's not the soldiers on the Western side who shoot them."

"All the same, people ought to stay where they belong in order to build socialism. It's the bait offered by the Americans that is the conspiracy."

"You know, I was in Lübeck a few years ago. I was taken to the East German frontier which is only ten kilometres away. There were ten kilometres of peaceful, smiling countryside, grass, flowers, trees. . . . Then suddenly, a barrier—and behind the barrier, not a tree, not a flower, only ploughed fields which hadn't been sown on purpose, in order to make it more difficult to walk across them for those who wanted to flee to the West. There were observation posts at intervals, but not a single living being, not a single house—a desert, a sinister paranoid desert—nothing could be more expressive of the Soviet persecution mania and of the people who are in power in the Iron Curtain countries. On the one side everything was openly welcoming, on the other everything was totally inhospitable. . . . And yet no one wants to attack the Russians."

"It's part of the nature of capitalist imperialism to want to expand its boundaries. Russia has good reason to feel threatened."

"So, according to you, she has good reason to place missile-launchers along her frontiers and to mass thousands of tanks against two or three American divisions?"

"The Russians will never be the first to attack."

"What about Angola?"

"That was the Cubans, not the Russians. You're not going to tell me that the Cuban people, the heroic Cuban peasantry, are imperialists. The Cubans didn't occupy Angola, they came to help in the liberation of her people."

"What about the Americans in Viet Nam and the rest of Indo-China, for example?"

"That's different. They were the occupying forces. Helped, it's true, by a part of the population. But one finds collaborators and traitors everywhere. Didn't we have some in France in 1940?"

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"Let's get back to the neurosis of persecution. I've been several times to Israel, as you know. In spite of everything, the Israelis feel free, self-confident, there's an atmosphere of gaiety. You simply don't find that paranoia, that fear of spies and foreigners. Foreigners can move about freely, go anywhere they like. The Israelis aren't afraid of foreigners. I'm not asking you to be pro-Palestinian or pro-Israeli, but to accept objectively that the Israelis live normally despite the fact that no country could be more surrounded, more encircled by its enemies than Israel."

"That's different. They're supported by the world-wide diaspora, the Jews of the entire world. That's why they're so self-confident."

"But the Soviets have the communist parties of the world on their side. Innumerable supporters who have betrayed their own countries and handed over to them military secrets of enormous importance. I repeat, they've got the help of communist parties all over the world, and their fellow-travellers. Between 30 and 50% per cent of world opinion."

"You're wrong there, my dear fellow, communist parties are independent. They have no contact with Moscow."

"So they say. It's also what they didn't say only a few months ago."

"You're the victim of American propaganda", my friend told me.

"The Americans don't know how to make propaganda, apart from the propaganda they make against themselves. But you can't deny that the Israelis possess audacity, ingenuity, courage. Tell me, what do you think of the Israeli raid on Entebbe?"

"They certainly had the last laugh", replied my friend grumpily.

We came in sight of an hotel. "Let's stop and have a drink."

"I just don't read *Le Figaro*", my friend concluded as he pushed open the door.

Is Labour Facing Catastrophe?

Reconsiderations—By JOHN MACKINTOSH

THE LABOUR Party, like the nation of which it is a part, seems to have lost its way.

It has to be admitted that though it has been in office for eight of the last twelve years, Labour Governments have not had any impact on the pattern of British society. Their chief theme has been carrying further the policies of the 1945–50 Attlee Government by expanding the public sector but even this policy has been subject to continual cutbacks. The only new feature has been the rapid decline in the confidence of the private sector, the need to borrow abroad to maintain internal living standards and the slump in the value of sterling. There have also been new trends peculiar both in British history and among nations of a similar size and social composition. All the industrial countries, in 1974–76, faced heavier unemployment than in other post-War recessions and serious inflation; but in Britain there has been a relative fall in productivity per man-hour and a decline in the percentage of the work-force employed in manufacturing industry. The consequence of periodic economic crises, of regular cuts in public expenditure targets, and (after 1974) of two years of falling real wages has been a serious public loss of confidence in the political system. The Labour

JOHN MACKINTOSH *was Professor of Politics at the University of Strathclyde from 1965-66, when he was elected Labour MP for Berwick and East Lothian. He lost his seat by 60 votes in the February 1974 general election, but was returned to Parliament again in October 1974. Among his books are "The British Cabinet" (1972), "British Government and Politics" (Hutchinson, 1970) and "The Devolution of Power" (1968). He is co-editor of the "Political Quarterly" (London). His articles in* ENCOUNTER *include "How Much Time Left for Parliamentary Democracy?" (August 1974) and "A State of Almost Total Confusion" (May 1976).*

He and Brian Walden, M.P. for Birmingham, Ladywood, defected from the Labour Whip by abstaining from voting for a Government bill on Docks Labour Regulation, thus causing a defeat for the Callaghan administration in the House of Commons and the total removal of the sections of the Bill which had granted certain trade unionists a monopoly of all loading and unloading of goods in a five mile "corridor" around the UK coast and inland waterways.

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Party (like the Conservative Party) has seen its individual membership drop by a half, so that in many constituencies there is only a handful of members and very few young people see anything in mainstream politics to attract them.

STANDING BACK A LITTLE from this immediate catalogue of problems, I have to ask: what should be the objective of the Labour Party? There is still much wrong with British society at two levels. One is the overall sense of failure which grips the country and makes it look inwards with little time for external issues, with declining concern for those overseas who are far worse off than the British. The Labour Party ought to seek to lift Britain out of this gloom by providing reasonable growth and successful economic management with a return to full employment and stable prices but without constant balance of payments crises, a sinking currency and cutbacks in the public sector.

Within this framework, at a second level, the Labour Party should try and remove injustices, most of which spring from the fact that among the developed countries Britain still has one of the most class-divided societies. No one thinks that drab uniformity is desirable, and it is taken for granted that people will prefer different types of houses, they will have different levels of pay, and some children will have more spent by the state on their education than others. What *is* unfair is that being at the bottom of one hierarchy, having, for example, a badly-paid dead-end job, often means that that person also lives in the poorest housing, his children have the least satisfactory schooling, and those in authority give him least time and sympathy. What the Labour Party should try to do is to bias society in favour of the underprivileged, to ensure that if they get the worst of some sides of life, they get the best of others. Also, while no Socialist (well, hardly any) nowadays believes in total equality of incomes, in a society which lays so much emphasis on the enjoyment of material goods a wide gap between average income-levels and those of the poorest segments of society does bring real hardship. Is it fair if significant numbers of children are denied the standard of life that they constantly see presented as normal on television? It is also important to maintain equality of treatment of people by those with any form of power or authority; people must be treated with respect and the widest area of freedom to choose and to express themselves must be created and maintained.

GIVEN THESE OBJECTIVES for the Labour Party, two reservations should be made. The first is that the Party must not confuse ends and means. Historically, the Left advocated "public ownership" as a means to achieve a variety of ends. These were a reduction of the *rentier* class who live on profits, production not solely based on market criteria, better labour relations, and higher investment. Public ownership can be a method of achieving some of these ends; but it must be judged as a technique and must be rejected if it is less effective than other techniques.

Also, a very wide extension of public ownership can produce limitations of freedom in a way which had not been appreciated by the early Socialists. If there is only one employer, freedoms to change jobs or to strike may be threatened (as Polish workers have demonstrated, and strikes in their publicly-owned economy become revolts against the state). If there is only one landlord, tenants can become the victims of petty bureaucrats or of rules designed to make life easy for administrators. (There are modern council-house estates where "landlordism" is worse in this respect than in the old privately-owned tenements, *e.g.*, rules banning dogs or prohibiting all subletting.) So public ownership should be advocated not for its own sake but only if its adoption does demonstrably materially improve people's standard of life and scope to live free from direction by others who are in positions of power.

For example, for many years landlords in the highlands of Scotland bought land for holidays and for sport and drove off the tenants or prohibited the residents from developing the area. It is quite clear that the state would be rather better than these highland landlords, and so there is a case for nationalisation of the land in this area. But, on the other hand, in small towns where all the houses are council houses—where there are enough houses for everyone wanting to live there and no waiting list—it would add enormously to people's sense of independence and freedom if the local authority simply gave all the houses to the tenants and everyone became an owner-occupier.

One other aspect of the refusal to think about ends is the recent assumption that everything demanded by each and every trade union is correct and must be supported by the Labour Party. Sometimes legitimate attempts by a union to protect or improve the position of its members can be damaging to the majority of working people or to the nation as a whole.

A SECOND RESERVATION is that there can never be a time when social development stops and a party of the Left can say "our political objectives have been achieved . . . we have reached our Utopia." Every change that is made and each new generation that takes over will produce new problems; and this is why today, as so often before, it is

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necessary to pause, draw the distinction between ends and means once again, look at methods and machinery, and then set off to tackle the new problems. Too often in politics, programmes are designed to solve the problems of the previous twenty years by methods devised after much trial-and-error by which time the problems have changed and the techniques have become counter-productive.

To take another example from the housing field, it was absolutely right to build local-authority houses of good quality to replace or supplement the slums of 19th-century cities. But in recent years, the points systems by which people became tenants of the local public authorities have had the effect of leaving only the poorest, the most hopeless, the vagrant, the sick and elderly, or the defenceless immigrant groups in the slums. Then these houses deteriorated further, and so the end effect of new council-house schemes has been to intensify segregation and the problems of the underprivileged.

The task of the Labour Party should be to restore national confidence and the sense that people can control their own affairs. At the same time, the Party must improve the degree of social justice by modifying and finally removing the class structure and insisting on equality of respect for all individuals. But it is one thing to set out the objectives; quite another to begin to achieve them.

WHAT HAS gone wrong?

One common response is to ignore these discussions about ends or objectives and to concentrate on a sweeping critique of current society. And this critique usually fails to distinguish between British problems and the rather different situation say in Germany, Sweden or France, treating them all simply and mechanically as examples of "the Crisis of Capitalism." The argument is that if there is anything special about Britain, it is not that this country lags behind others but that it is a particularly advanced case of late-capitalist collapse. Is this a satisfactory account of the situation?

There is only one line of analysis which backs up this slogan about the "collapse of Capitalism" with a coherent account of recent developments. Put at its simplest, this account says that there has been a tremendous concentration of industrial and commercial activities in the hands of a relatively small number of huge corporations. These corporations operate in many states; they are therefore able to avoid Keynesian methods of national economic control and regulation, the only solution being to take them over so that all national and social progress depends on a massive extension of public ownership. Stuart Holland sets out this case in its most complete form,[1] and it has become the basis of the thinking of the Left in the Labour Party (apart from that of the pure dogmatic Marxists). However, as an account of recent economic, social and political history, it has a number of serious weaknesses.

First, it is true that there has been a concentration of economic activity in the hands of a smaller number of Multinational firms, but this does not explain why the British economy dominated by these firms does so much worse than similar economies in other countries. Moreover, while firms of this size can fix their markets and determine many of the prices they charge, they cannot totally avoid the market mechanism, *i.e.*, the judgment of the consumer. Why do so many Britons prefer foreign cars, Japanese TV sets, or Italian refrigerators? Why are British car-manufacturers howling for import controls while the German Automobile Association awards Leyland "the silver lemon" for the most undesirable and unsaleable car on the German market?

One overall point has to be accepted by the Labour Movement. This country cannot set up a wall of "import controls" and live autarchically off its own. We import a great deal of the necessities of life and cannot maintain our standards of life if we cannot sell enough on the international market to pay for these imports. This would be true whether this country was socialist, communist, or capitalist. Nor can the situation be the product of a "conspiracy by the multinationals." They can have no reason for wanting their German or their French sectors to succeed at the expense of the sectors (and the capital invested) in Britain. Whatever the explanation of this relative failure, it is rooted in British society and not in the corporate structure or intentions of the large firms which dominate our economy and the

[1] *The Socialist Challenge*. By STUART HOLLAND. Quartet Books £5.95

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THE CRISIS *of the Labour Party goes deeper than the failure of Mr Denis Healey as a Chancellor or the division inside the party. The real crisis of the Labour Party is that its policies are no longer relevant. Apart from more general support, the Labour Party still has a firm base in a group of strong trade unions, accounting in all for perhaps a third of the trade union labour force or about a sixth of the total labour force of Britain. It also has a function as a political expression of the old working class interest, which is again a minority though an important one in the total working population. It also has support among intellectuals. Yet to succeed a party of the Left has to have a policy as well as a base.*

THE LABOUR PARTY *has historically stood for a number of linked but separate causes.*

It stood for high welfare and social security expenditure. It stood for national ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange—the celebrated Clause 4. It stood for equality and the redistribution of wealth. It stood for state intervention, an increase in the power of the state and an increase in the size and power of the bureaucracy. It stood for an extension of the power of the trade unions. Socialism in Britain has indeed meant social expenditure, nationalisation, progressive taxation, government control, a big bureaucracy and trade union power.

Can Britain afford higher social expenditure? Does Britain need more nationalisation? Should taxes go still higher? Should the powers of government be increased? Ought there to be more civil servants? Ought the trade unions to have more power? These questions now go to the heart of the Labour case.

THERE HAS ALSO BEEN *a libertarian strain in Labour Party thinking which has been reinforced by the middle class intellectual elements that have been attracted to the party. Obviously the main thrust of socialism is authoritarian, and we are most of us less free in important aspects of our lives because of the work that Labour Governments have carried out in the twentieth century.*

Yet on secondary issues the Labour Party has been a libertarian party, and on private members bills Labour votes have carried a number of liberal reforms. Most of these reforms appealed more to the intellectuals than to basic Labour support. Some, but not all of them, were inspired by an attitude of hostility to authority, in dealing with crime, in education, in acceptance of law, which the public has come to mistrust. The public has also rejected the open door attitude to immigration. . . .

THE LABOUR PARTY **has been a great historical force. Its first beginnings were in a period when the balance of society required correction. Almost all of its proposals were then reasonable, though its ultimate aims were always dangerous. Social expenditures needed to be increased. The state needed to take a more active role of support in the economy. The trade unions needed to be in a position to match the then overwhelming power of the employers. The rights and dignity of British working people needed to be asserted. By mobilising the political power of the working population the Labour Party managed by the middle of this century to redress the balance.**

Since then the cumulative effect of Labour Governments has been to push the balance over the other way, to create a society and an economy in which the excess of government expenditure, the suppression of incentives, the excess of bureaucratic power and the excess of trade union power endanger freedom and destroy the possibility of prosperity.

This is the real crisis of the Labour Party; that they have passed the point at which their historic role has been fulfilled and are being carried by the momentum of their succcess to what is now a work of disorder. The things the Labour Party exists to do are no longer the things that need to be done. They have indeed brought Britain to the situation we are now in.

The Times
(London)

HOW IS *social democracy related to socialism? It all depends, of course, upon how "socialism" is understood.*

Unfortunately socialism has been identified too often, not with the moral ends of democracy as a way of life, but only with one of the means *by which some socialists in the past hoped that those moral ends could be furthered, viz., with collectivism or the nationalisation of all means of production, distribution, and exchange.*

Unfortunately, socialists have made a fetish of the means without considering the consequences of those means on professed ends or goals.

Unfortunately, socialism has been too often identified with a social system in which there is no vestige of political democracy, and in which the slightest expression of dissent brings penalties that have varied from tortured exile in the camps of the Gulag Archipelago, to confinement in insane asylums. The consequence has been that the workers and

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peasants have suffered more and enjoyed less freedom in the nationalised economies of the socialist countries of the world than in the non-socialist democratic societies of the West.

Unfortunately, socialism has too often been identified with a police state in which the inhabitants are penned in by walls, electrified fences, and minefields, and no one is free to leave.

Unfortunately, this historical conjunction of socialism and terror has strengthened a widely held view that the only alternative open to those who love freedom is support of the free enterprise system, that any movement away from capitalism as an economic system involves the abandonment of freedom and democracy.

WE SOMETIMES HEAR *that the basic issue is between Capitalism and Socialism as economic systems. This is actually the constant theme song of Kremlin propaganda despite the absence of either free enterprise or socialism in their classic forms anywhere in the world. This counterposition of Capitalism* or *Socialism is not only false, for the specific content of economic decisions is not between capitalism and socialism but between more or less of either, it misses the central issue. Human beings do not fight for economic systems. Who would be willing to die for capitalism? Certainly not the capitalists! Who would go to the barricades for a totally nationalised economy? Not even the Webbs. No, the issue is not between capitalism and socialism.* **The issue is whether human beings are to be free to choose for themselves the economic system under which they wish to live or whether this is to be imposed upon them forcibly by a small group of self-selected rulers responsible to no one but themselves.**

Or we sometimes hear that the basic issue between the democratic and communist worlds is between religion and irreligion. I have a premonition we may hear more about this in the future. In the past, President Eisenhower, whose charming and vacuous smile matched his knowledge of international affairs, and who confessed himself stumped by General Zhukov's questions as to what ideals inspired the West, repeatedly warned us against the dangers of "atheistic communism" as if a communism that wasn't atheistic would be any less objectionable.

No, the issue is not now, nor has it ever been, between religion and irreligion. It has always been the *freedom to choose* **between them, the freedom to worship or not to worship one, many, or no gods; the right of one's conscience to believe or not to believe, or the dogmatic intolerance that makes the state power the arbiter of the faiths of man.**

NOR IS THE ISSUE *between formalism or modernism in art or culture, on the one hand, or socialist realism, whatever that is, on the other. Once again the issue is* **the right to choose freely one's own values or philosophy,** *to experiment with new art forms and life styles, or to submit to a state-imposed view.*

Nor is the issue which system can outproduce the other as in the famous Nixon-Kruschev debate. The issue is rather whether those who produce society's goods and services have the right at least to some extent to determine, through their free trade unions and other voluntary associations, the conditions and rewards of work, or whether this is to be dictated by bureaucratic decrees backed by the coercive powers the state.

In short, what is at stake is the most precious principle of liberal civilization whose roots were nurtured in Athens, Jerusalem, and Rome, and which began to bud at the time of the humanist Renaissance, and to flower when the American Declaration of Independence made the principle of freely-given consent the hallmark of legitimate political sovereignty. When we say that social democracy puts freedom first, we mean that freedom becomes the touchstone of policy, a principle that cannot be compromised whether for the sale of machinery or oil or wheat or for the benefit of any special economic vested interests that look longingly at the markets of the Soviet Union and China, as their similars once did during the thirties at the markets of Japan and Germany.

WE ARE NOT ALONE *in our specific programmes for more employment, more insurance, more welfare, less discrimination, less bureaucratic inefficiency. Our spiritual task should be to relate these programmes and demands to the underlying philosophy of democracy, to express and defend those larger moral ideals that should inform programmes for which we wish to develop popular support.*

These large ideals are not Utopian blueprints but perspectives by which to judge the direction and quality of desirable social changes. Without these ideals we cannot formulate any conception of a good society or a better society. The demand for "More!" carries us beyond the status quo *but "more" is not enough. We must know what is desirable and worth having before wanting more of it. We know that jobs are worth having, and programmes of full employment at decent wages, lacking which a comprehensive insurance programme should provide relief.*

But over and above this I believe we must raise our eyes to distant horizons to grasp a vision of society not only abundant and free but in which every person feels he has a significant stake and a sense of worth and esteem regardless of the work he is doing.

Sidney Hook
in NEW AMERICA

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economies of the other industrial states of Western Europe.

SECONDLY, THERE IS very little evidence that these firms dictate to or dominate successive British Governments. No doubt some of them try to dodge taxes and go in for dubious financial practices, but they give every evidence of fear when any government rounds on them. The big steel bosses tried to boycott the Board of the British Steel Corporation to no avail. A few months ago Lord Watkinson said his Confederation of British Industries would not send out a letter urging its members to invest more, but very few industrialists take a whit of notice what the CBI says. It is true that British industry has not responded adequately to recent tax incentives to invest (introduced by both Conservative and Labour Governments), but this has not been due to combined action motivated by political considerations, rather to a genuine lack of confidence in the rate of profit that will be earned and in the continuance of government policies designed to encourage investment. If British governments have been open to pressure by external agencies in recent years, the Trade Unions have proved far more potent than the Multinationals and have defeated or obtained the withdrawal of industrial-relations and incomes policies which both the Wilson and the Heath Governments tried to enact or in fact did enact and then had to abandon. No companies individually or collectively have managed anything of this kind or have even tried to operate directly in this way at a national political level. If the huge corporations had anything like the power attributed to them, they would force the Government to restrict unofficial strikes and other forms of industrial pressure on them. In practice, all the pressure has come from the other direction and unions can demand and get anti-industry policies enacted when industry cannot (and has barely even tried) to get anti-union policies put forward.

Thirdly, if the Stuart Holland type of argument were correct, there would be a dramatic change in the conduct and performance of industries once they were nationalised and, accordingly, liberated from the quasi-political objectives of the privately-owned multinationals. In fact there is no evidence that the nationalised industries have done much better than the private sector either in terms of investment, of support for government policies, or of better industrial relations. Mr Richard Pryke argued that the investment record of the nationalised industries was better in the 1950s and early 1960s but now thinks this advantage has gone due to political interference. What is clear is that large public corporations do fall victim to problems of bureaucratic control while the remaining market pressures which do, to some extent, discipline the private conglomerates have less effect on them. This is why the British public, which has little confidence in the present economic system (for good reason), equally shows no enthusiasm for the extension of public ownership. Not only is the performance of such industry no better than that of the private sector but there is a genuine and justified conviction that, in the face of public monopolies, the consumer counts for even less. The problems for consumers and for employees—indeed for the public at large—if the vast bulk of the economy was under public ownership would not be dissimilar from the situation in certain other countries where this is already the case.

IF, THEN, this Marxist-type analysis neither explains why Britain has had this period of relative economic decline nor propounds solutions which look like producing either more rapid growth or more freedom of choice and more social justice, what is the explanation of these problems and what are the lines along which solutions could be attempted?

CONSIDER, FIRST, the relative failure of the British economy. The central feature is the decline in British productivity. In 1955, after ten years of post-War reconstruction, British productivity was 15% above that of Germany and France, and 40% above that of Italy. Since 1973 all industrialised European countries have been ahead of Britain: the Netherlands being 54% higher, Belgium 40% higher, with France and Germany each 30% above the British rate. Given the presence of much the same package of Multinationals with much the same motives in each of these countries, why should this dramatic reversal have taken place?

It is correct that British finance is not as closely allied to British industry as in the case of some of these countries (as the Labour Party's NEC paper on nationalising the banks and insurance companies argues). But it is not the case that viable, profitable ventures are starved of capital. Indeed, the whole theory of the dominance of a few vast firms invalidates this as internal financing is usually possible in these Multinationals. The problem is lack of confidence in the profitability—that is the productivity—of British industry, and this is due to the cumulative effect of British political institutions, taxation policies, social habits, and businessmen's experiences in recent years.

As has so often been contended, management in Britain is weak, relatively badly trained and lacks dynamism and self-confidence. It must have an effect that the first preference of the ablest in

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our universities is to go into academic life, the next group prefers to enter the professions, the third choice is the civil service and the fourth local government; industry and commerce come at the bottom of the list. Then there is the effect of the class system which does inhibit any kind of easy and understanding relations between management and workers.[2] The sense of a common interest is too often lacking. The result, added to the disappointing economic experience of the last fifteen years, is to make trade unions defensive and resistant to change. The argument that, whatever happens, "any change is likely to be for the worse" and that the workers have to "carry the heavy end of the stick" has been true too often to allow a confident, forward-looking approach to technical innovation.

In general, British society is conservative with a small "c": reluctant to try new ideas, lacking impatience over bad service and unsatisfactory products, while weak management and poor labour relations only make matter worse.

Finally, Government is to blame. Successive governments have wanted marked improvements in investment and in productivity and have brought in new policies. They have tried carrots and sticks, have talked of "restructuring" in little Neddies or of compulsion through a National Enterprise Board. Each policy was brought in and dropped before the last policy had had time to produce results, time in the literal sense of time to take on staff, train them, put in the machines, obtain finished products, get orders and arrange sales. In these same years, taxation had been heavy and profit levels have steadily declined. As a result, British industry is bewildered, feels threatened and has largely stopped reacting to these goals, preferring simply to settle for something low-level, for a quiet life.

IT WILL, I know, take years to get British industry back to a rate of investment, of competence and confidence which will put British productivity back up to the level of the best of our rivals—back to a level which would create real confidence in the pound, prevent balance of payments crises and let everyone, both politicians and the public, take their eyes off the monthly economic indicators. But suppose that Britain's relative prosperity could be restored overnight. Suppose that this had happened yesterday, would the Labour Party's problems be solved and its sense of idealism restored? Would "the Movement" feel that it knew what was needed to improve British society and to achieve the objectives that have been outlined?

THE ANSWER clearly is "no." It would help electorally if a Labour Government was clearly responsible for such a transformation; but the Left is in no great shape in countries like Germany where there has been economic success, or in Sweden where the Left has just been defeated after 44 years in power and a long record of economic success.

Aside from Britain's special economic problems, what are the difficulties the Labour Party has to overcome in evolving means to achieve its general goals?

The first is to give up the outmoded obsession over ownership. The idea that to change the ownership of a company or an industry is to alter its whole approach and capacity has been proved wrong time and again. Yet arguments over ownership still absorb the energies of the Left (and the Right). It would be so easy and simple if extensions of public ownership did make the "fundamental" difference claimed by the Left. But the class structure remains unaltered as the new managers buy better houses and private education for their children. As for disagreeable political interference, there is certainly more of it in nationalised industry and bureaucracy is a shade worse. But in general there is little "fundamental" difference.

THE FIRST TASK for the Labour Party is to evolve criteria for running a successful Mixed Economy where both the public and the private sectors feel they are useful. There must be a positive theoretical defence of such a system on grounds of freedom and of economic performance. It must not be regarded simply as a stage on the road to full public ownership (or on the way back to full private enterprise). Methods have to be found of manning and supervising both the public and the private sectors and of protecting the interests of consumers.

A second problem is that the Labour Movement and the Trade Unions no longer include virtually all the underprivileged in British society and no one else. Thus, a social policy which is egalitarian—which really seeks to help the underprivileged and the poor—has to be paid for (in part) by some within the ranks of the Labour Movement. The biggest cause of inequality is income differentials, but to narrow these (by flat-rate income increases) horrifies certain Unions. To push up child-welfare benefits leads to more taxation and nowadays many workers pay a considerable rate of tax (which is the main reason why the recent child welfare scheme was shelved). To eradicate poverty means considerable

[2] See the essay by Goronwy Rees, "Amateurs and Gentlemen", which was published by ENCOUNTER as long ago as July 1963 in Arthur Koestler's special issue, "Suicide of a Nation."

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expenditure on limited groups which can be deeply resented by those just above the cut-off point, *i.e.*, by those whose incomes may be no higher after tax but who do work often for long hours and at the least pleasant jobs.

Some of these weaknesses, or problems, are built into the structure of the Labour Party in that the unions have a commanding voice through the block vote at the annual Conference and in the elections for the National Executive Committee. As a result, it is difficult for the Party to say, "We represent the bulk of the people and it is in their interests to prevent the kind of restrictive practices that impoverish the nation. We also intend to redistribute income to the poor (many of whom are not represented in unions), to single-parent families and to the sick (even if it means less in the pay-packet of large and powerful groups who hold key positions in our Party). . . ." The Labour Party today is not sure whether it represents the less privileged or whether it represents certain powerful producer groups. In the last few months, introduction of the unpopular Dock Work Bill largely to please the Transport and General Workers Union and the postponement of the child-benefit scheme to please the TUC both show where power lies within the Party.

Lastly, there is a problem about *participation*. The Labour Movement has governed Britain for half the post-War period. In many local areas, it has been "the Establishment" for years on end. When Labour gets power, it tends to be very reluctant to share it, to consult its own members, or to set up machinery for participation. Labour Governments have done nothing to restore the power of the Commons or its capacity to watch over civil servants and to make them explain their policies. It has clung to official secrecy. The resistance to devolution for Scotland and Wales comes from the Left's traditional view that once a policy has been approved, it must be imposed throughout the country. Local preferences or choices are seen as essentially particularist, selfish and reactionary.

WHAT, THEN, SHOULD BE the programme of a revitalised Labour Party? The programme has to fulfil two separate but connected objectives. It has to restore the British economy and show how our society could be made fairer, more open, more responsive to the needs of the underprivileged. The first task is to shake loose of the restrictions of special interests. Any Labour Party must rely on the votes and the backing of the bulk of trade unionists and work in close cooperation with the Unions. But it must be made clear that the Party is bigger than these groups, that it also represents those who are unorganised and have no voice. For example, it is in everyone's interest to get exports and imports cheaply in and out of this country. If this damages dockers' interests, they must be helped but not at the permanent expense of the rest of the community. (It is worth noting that dockers in Amsterdam—where new methods come in more easily and more rapidly—are better paid than dockers in London.)

The Labour Party must have policies that give industry stability and continuity and it must explain to all its members, the university students, and the unions that we have to live by our efforts in the world market, and that it is of the highest value to society to do a good job in trade, commerce or industry.

Then the Party must produce a coherent anti-poverty programme designed to channel resources to those sectors of our society in need while excluding blanket benefits and subsidies to those on adequate incomes. All the Party's education, housing, and social policies must be geared to removing Britain's debilitating and degrading class distinctions, and this may require new techniques very different from those which served a useful purpose when there was widespread poverty and deprivation.

The task is to create a programme which is realistic but will revive optimism and confidence in the future of the United Kingdom and in the possibility of achieving significant reforms, economic success, and social justice.

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Johns Hopkins

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Re-reading Norman Macrae—By ANTHONY HARTLEY

THE FUTURE OF the United States is a tempting subject for the exercise of the imagination. The scope of a destiny, which includes all our destinies, is so vast, its possibilities so unlimited, that the brain reels before a Pisgah view where history, science fiction, and a messianic utopianism are mingled.

To the jumbo martini of American enthusiasm, confidence, and bustle can be added the *LSD* of futurology and a tranquillising draught of assurance that mankind is on the march and that something somewhere can still be done to deflect its course towards desirable ends. No wonder that the mixture sends a foreigner tripping (whether the trip be a "good" or a "bad" one is another matter). Thoughtful Americans, however, take their own infinities with a grain of salt, and, as one who observed the change in the late 1960s from unjustified optimism to equally unjustified pessimism about America's future, the present writer finds it hard to think them wrong or that too much attention should be paid to the contingent changes of intellectual fashion. There is no more reason to believe in the fashionable terrors of the year 2000 than there is in the likelihood of the American people ending the 20th century in the midst of the Big Rock Candy Mountains.

As a British commentator on the United States Norman Macrae is a distinguished representative of a distinguished line. His analysis, original and brilliantly expressed as it is, does not entirely escape the over-excitement of a European faced by the American experience, though it remains firmly anchored to facts. Moreover, I have been re-reading his two remarkable *Economist* surveys, produced in 1969 and 1975,[1] and they have a constancy of outlook which makes few concessions to fashion. Indeed, it might be argued that this self-discipline sometimes goes a little far. The 1975 survey, by what can only be regarded as a supreme self-denying ordinance on the part of a practising journalist, has no discussion of the Watergate affair, while discussing almost everything else. Such an exclusion, however, is quite in the line of Mr Macrae's general approach to the United States, and there will be more to say about it later on. Meanwhile, it is no denigration at all of his reports to say that they read like pamphlets, written with bite and a corruscating display of knowledge; they are passionate, polemical and intensely interesting.

THERE WOULD BE MUCH to contest and much to accept in the detail of Macrae's reports, but it is more interesting and more feasible to examine the gist of his argument as it has developed over seven years.

The Neurotic Trillionaire (1969) gave a picture of the United States which was basically that of a giant beset by vexations. A country so rich in economic and technological power, so enterprising and so resilient, could, so it seemed, cope with the problems represented by urban decay, racial division, and erupting campuses.

> For this, after all is the society in which the last important stage of man's long economic revolution is succeeding.

In 1969 it appeared that the only really threatening clouds on the horizon were the

[1] Norman Macrae, "The Neurotic Trillionaire: A Survey of Mr Nixon's America", *The Economist* (10 May 1969). *America's Third Century*. By NORMAN MACRAE. *The Economist* (25 October 1975); Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $2.95, £2.

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difficulty of fitting the American Negro into the rich middle-class picture which the future appeared to promise, and the disaffection of a section of American youth from the values which were to produce that future.

By 1975 Macrae's prognosis had changed. By this time the neurotic trillionaire was lying limply stretched upon the psychoanalyst's couch afflicted by a bad case of megalo-idealism. A large section of the Negro middle-class might have belied the fears of 1969 by opting decisively for an eternity of bliss spent in the very best hotel in Miami, but the entrepreneur and *a fortiori* his children were imbibing from magazines and university lectures a set of ideas which increasingly inhibited economic growth, discouraged business enterprise, and slowed down technological innovation. A whole new series of brakes on American productivity, ranging from a distaste among the young for service in corporations to the ecological movement with its pressure groups and protests, could be seen to be undermining the supreme American achievement: the provision, for large masses of men, of a standard of living through which might be foreseen a development of human possibilities on a scale unrealised by previous civilisations. What was now taking place in the United States was analogous to a similar change in Great Britain during the middle of the 19th century.

> By around 1876 a British intellectual could have a pleasant life in contemplation, and his most natural resentment (like the resentment of the squire, the parson and bureaucrat) came to be against vulgar people who were restlessly and commercially pushful.

The result has been that, as was the case with 19th-century Britain,

> . . . world leadership is . . . liable to pass into new hands quite early in the century 1976–2076.

American behaviour and ability to assume responsibility during this period would depend upon the evolution of the institutions of the United States. "These three main institutions are, in reverse order of importance: its business corporations; its government; and its mechanisms for living together. . . ." (By this final category Macrae means what is often called "a sense of community" or "values held in common.")

NOW, IN SO FAR AS Norman Macrae detects a weakening in the secular self-confidence with which Americans have approached their own economic self-aggrandisement, it is impossible to disagree with him. In the late 1960s, one could still hear the words "business values" pronounced in a tone that was half awe, half moral superiority. This is certainly less and less the case today; and this change must be seen as an immediate loss of impetus, since it is undoubtedly a considerable advantage to be able to regard what one is doing as, in some sense, good and useful. But the transformation, detectable in the young from the mid-60s, which now, according to Macrae, is affecting the country's whole attitude towards economic growth and the struggle for success in business, is a far more fundamental one than perhaps he realises.

A sense of "manifest destiny" informed American life in more areas than that of continental expansion. The idea of mission, which provided so powerful a stimulus for American industrialists and business men, itself stemmed from the religious sensibility of the Puritan. In 1907, when John D. Rockefeller felt constrained to give some explanation of his own ideal role, he issued a statement through a Baptist minister which would have served as an admirable credo for most entrepreneurs of his type:

> "I am a trustee of the property of others through the providence of God committed to my care. . . . Therefore, I feel it my duty to God and to the people whose money is invested in my company to continue active in its welfare. . . ."

We need detect no hypocrisy here. A similar type of religious sensibility inspired the social reformers who were Rockefeller's contemporaries with the confidence that they, too, were about the Lord's work in trying to restrict the power of Standard Oil and the other great corporations of the day. The dynamism of American life—a dynamism that responded so suitably to an open frontier and the opportunities offered by the resources of a continent—was generated, in large part, by the individual conscience confident of a profound accord between its own aspirations and the decrees of divine providence. Even today the echoes of Rockefeller's apologia can still be heard lingering on in the insipid moralising of public relations companies handling corporate advertising.

THE USEFULNESS of this American "business ethic" in terms of the economic development of the United States is not in dispute, however bizarre some of its side-effects may have been. But the point is this. If we regard that attitude as one result of the holding of strong transcendental beliefs or even as a transitional aftermath of such beliefs—and we must so regard it—then it is neither particularly surprising that it should gradually disappear nor particularly easy to see what could consciously be done to save it. In fact, the change of attitude towards business which Macrae has remarked is but one instance of the

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decay of a whole system of belief which, when translated into action, helped to bring about the extraordinary American success story of the 19th and 20th centuries.[2]

There are many other examples of this shift in values (or, more accurately, crumbling of values, since it is not at all certain what any new value system will be). It is clear, for instance, and, I imagine, would hardly be disputed by anyone that, in the area of morals, Puritan behaviour is being swamped by the onset of what is called "the permissive society." Similarly, the contemporary emphasis on the individual as a "consumer", a passive Epicurean exercising his will only in the choice of alternative satisfactions, is at a far remove from the active, practical individual, conscious of his mission in life and confident in its rectitude, who was the result of Puritan religious sensibility. Macrae expresses the hope that America will come to believe in "extended and informed consumers' freedom" in "factory and politics" rather than "participatory producers' democracy." But it seems probable that the one will, in the long run, undermine the economic dynamism, which he values, as much as the other.

Taken as an attitude towards life, Puritanism is indivisible. As I have written before in ENCOUNTER, it is hard to imagine that values and behaviour at work can be totally divorced from values and behaviour in private life: that the disciplined and deferential corporation employee should easily make the transition from his hurried and non-alcoholic lunch to marijuana and the pleasures of the Polynesian long hut of an evening.[3] One obvious comment on Macrae's critique of contemporary America would be that it confirms the impression that a break-down of Puritan patterns of behaviour, which began most noticeably in the sphere of manners, is spreading into that of attitudes towards work, as one always imagined it would. In these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the young should regard working for the corporation as artificial, boring, and soul-destroying. Without dedication, which enables men to look towards the final achievement and ignore even boredom, work in a large bureaucratic organisation is all these things. Dedication, however, is hardly something which can be willed upon a society.

ALL THIS HAS TAKEN US far enough from self-destructive deviation inspired by the perversity of intellectuals. Now let us look at another example of the relationship between moral feeling and social change.

The ecological craze is certainly an outcrop of the resentment which has been building up against economic growth and its servant technology—an example whose manifestations often appear exceedingly foolish. The struggle to prevent new power-stations from being built anywhere near New York City seems aberrant if we remember the crying need for new industry (and air-conditioning!) in that city's poorer areas—something only explicable by the sheer lust of battle as issues in American local government are thrashed out between combatants whose strength consists in their ability to remain entirely blind to the other side's case. However, there are more interesting things to be said about the ecological movement than that its supporters are often wrong-headed. A more important question is why it attracts those supporters—why just at this moment it should have taken on such proportions?

The obvious answer is that attacks on the way in which the great corporations have ravaged nature and squandered natural resources are frequently well-founded (as anyone who has read the publications of an organisation like *California Tomorrow* will know). If the fate of the redwoods had been left to be determined by the logging companies, there would eventually have been no redwoods. As it is, the efforts of conservationists have restricted the freedom of timber merchants to do what they like with the oldest living things in the world, and this remains a distinct gain from almost any point of view, however much it may disappoint those who want redwood doors and furniture. Secondly, conservation is an activity which is essentially participatory, bringing into play all the active practical gifts of the American middle classes for ends which appear obviously desirable. It has something in it for everyone from the school-children who collect rubbish

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[2] I had written the first draft of this essay before I was able to read Daniel Bell's stimulating book on *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1976). In the title essay is described the process which I have mentioned summarily here.

> "American capitalism . . ." [writes Professor Bell] has lost its traditional legitimacy, which was based on a moral system of reward rooted in the Protestant sanctification of work. It has adopted a hedonism which promises material ease and luxury, yet shies away from all the historic implications of a 'voluptuary system', with all its social permissiveness and libertinism." (p. 84).

The Protestant ethic was, of course, the product of Protestant belief, and the difficulty of describing this kind of change in terms of purely social values is that these inadequately explain their own existence.

[3] See Anthony Hartley, "Neither Bureaucrat nor Hippie: On the Ideal of Man in a Mass Society", ENCOUNTER, (March 1973). Bell also points to the conflict between the rational and relatively austere organisation of modern industrial structures and the anarchic and hedonistic trends in modern culture.

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from open spaces to the student who can throw out her liberated bosom and maunder on with Joan Baez about what "*They*" are doing to the rain. Thirdly, it has deep roots in American history and the American sensibility.

> "It seems [wrote Emerson] as if the day were not wholly profane in which we have given heed to some natural object. . . ."

This Wordsworthian sentiment of the moral value of an accord with nature runs through American thought—no doubt, it is another strand of Protestant Christianity deprived of its transcendent element. It is to be found expressed in the works of many writers, including some unlikely ones—Hemingway and Hart Crane, for instance. Moreover, the American consciousness has also been seared by the experience of vast man-made disasters: deforestation, soil erosion, the creation of dust-bowls on a huge scale, the disappearance of species of animals and birds, the fouling of the sea and rivers. Examples of destruction are, therefore, present in the minds of Americans to point the lesson that retribution follows the breaking of the pact with nature.[4] To re-establish that pact was to become the objective of many young Americans in the '60s. In its extreme form this aspiration could manifest itself by a retreat into a commune—a psychedelic Brook Farm—or, in a more moderate and social way, by a devotion to the values of a movement "back to nature."[5]

THUS, THE ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT, for all its exaggeration and craziness, is not just a damagingly self-indulgent piece of sentimentality. It springs from impulses in the moral sensibility of Americans which have always found powerful expression and which the decay of the Puritan work-ethos and sense of mission has liberated.

This could be put another way. For a consciousness engaged in the active transformation of its environment has been substituted a more passive attitude towards life, more concern for an accord with nature, more emphasis on "community" in relations with other men.[6] No doubt, it would be wrong to present such a shift in terms of "good" or "bad." The difficulty, indeed, in writing about this transformation is to avoid making the old attitudes derived from Puritanism sound ridiculous or cruel, to bring out their inherent grandeur. But if such a process is changing American moral values, then it is clear that, good or bad, constructive or destructive, it is not easily reversible. There is always more than one option for any society; and it is, after all, change of this kind that gives history its interest. We can only judge the final result of such metamorphoses through speculations which are difficult and imprecise; but it can at least be maintained that an orthodoxy of function, which implied the performance of the same role by a society down years of history, is unlikely to be achieved and would be intolerable if it actually were. Norman Macrae wishes the United States to retain a position of world leadership, to act as the cornucopia of the poor world and as the economic and technological pace setter of the rich; and such tasks are quite in accordance with past American aspirations and performance. However, it may be that Americans now wish to do something different—for example, make their own souls. If so, there is little that anyone can do about it.

Here perhaps the comparison with 19th-century England, which, to me at least, seems in some ways to be unhistorical, does apply. Writers like Carlyle and Matthew Arnold tried to influence the society of their day in favour of certain moral values which they saw as being swamped by a tide of materialism, whose effects in human terms produced evils with which they were

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[4] Such sentiments find expression in a whole range of writing from the reformers and progressives of the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the contemporary utterances of the Hippie movement. In 1912 Walter Weyl provided a typical example in his book *The New Democracy:*

> "Everywhere were the evil results of the destruction of forests, the denudation of soils, the impoverishment of rivers, the annihilation of animal life, and the insensate wasting of natural resources by men who knew no responsibility, and who in the midst of a self-created desolation were astounded at their own moderation. The continent, which had evoked the spirit which meant its ravishing, was now like a nursery, with its broken toys strewn upon the floor."

The New Democracy (repr. 1964), p. 67.

There is, in these sentences, not so much a protest on the grounds of sound exploitation of resources as a sense of violation, moral in its origin.

[5] "The poetic words of Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman blend with the hippie attempt to move back to the more natural posture of early America. A closer merging with the natural beauty of our streams, mountains, and the land strikes a chord with many Americans who have become part of the more recent, machine-like society." Lewis Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip* (1968), p. 336.

Dr Yablonsky's observations on the hippie movement are of great interest and lay bare clearly enough its moral and philosophical origins, despite the largely unformulated character of these beliefs and the inarticulacy of their expression. It would be fascinating to be able to compare his account with a description of the earlier "Beat" generation; but, unfortunately, no sociologist seems to have got to them early enough.

[6] This change was, of course, noticed by David Riesman many years ago in his book *The Lonely Crowd* (1950). See also his essay "After the Lonely Crowd", ENCOUNTER, October 1969.

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thoroughly familiar.[7] What were they to do? Reflect that their opinions might inhibit the competitiveness of British exports? Arnold's view that "sweetness and light" could be imported into society through the medium of the state may be unpopular nowadays, but the achievements in social reform carried out in this manner over three generations remain impressive. Unfortunately, few people read Arnold's educational writings now; but it is arguable that today we are suffering more from the decadent and philosophically inadequate utilitarianism of Crowther and Robbins than from the rather hard-headed idealism of the Victorians. Even in an economically tight spot it is permissible to think that the dominance of entrepreneurial values is not necessarily an unmixed blessing. In any case, Americans will choose for themselves.[8]

NORMAN MACRAE, however, points to a real problem: the conflict between contemporary American values and the American national achievement as we have known it in the past. For where there is a shift of values, there will be a change in practical activity—at the very least, a change in emphasis. Of course, one might assume that everything will turn out all right; that once again self-good and social will prove to be the same, though in a somewhat different sense to that which either Pope or a 19th-century entrepreneur would have given to the phrase. Irving Kristol in a perceptive essay, which goes some way towards laying the foundations of a genuine American conservatism, has criticised F. A. Hayek and Milton Friedman for the assumption, implicit in their concept of a "free society", that every unloaded throw of the social dice must produce a beneficent and agreeable combination of numbers.[9] In Kristol's view Professor Friedman's use of the word "consensus" amounts to "the mere aggregation of selfish aims"; the result may be satisfactory or it may not. For "consensus" used in this way could range from an unfettered social Darwinism and the triumph of the strong or rich to an atomised anarchy in which each individual pursued his or her own aims regardless of the social framework—a state of affairs which appears to approximate to the hippie ideal. The adoption of Milton Friedman's view, indeed, could increase the tension between Puritan and "permissive" values. For, in a society composed of the sum of individual satisfactions, there would be those who would contract out into the Bohemian, partially nomadic style of existence favoured by the hippies and those who would remain within a competitive market economy, devoting themselves to the accumulation of power and money.

It would be a world of financiers and fakirs.

TO MEDIATE BETWEEN, and ultimately to control, selfish aims has, of course, always been the basic purpose of the government of society. As Hobbes put it:

> "Hereby, it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war, as is of every man, against every man."[10]

Without making too much of the pessimistic view of human nature implied in this (though it seems to be the one most borne out by experience), it is easy to see that conflicting interests and differentiated functions in society require to be resolved and coordinated by some authority held to be legitimate by those over whom it claims dominion. Such an authority embodied in the state (which need not necessarily be the Nation-State, though nationalism provides an element of passionate cohesion which helps the acceptance of legitimacy by the citizen) is not particularly popular at the moment. Anarchist movements of various kinds, apologias for the "free play of market forces", the longing to return to Nature away from a "bureaucratic" or "plastic" industrial society, the demand for "Participation" in industry and government, attacks on "élitism"—all these things indicate a

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[7] In view of the extraordinary social activity of the great Victorian intellectuals, Macrae's description of them as enjoying "a pleasant life in contemplation" seems thoroughly misguided. It is perhaps the moment to protest against the present tendency to consider the past century or more of our national history in the light of what is considered to be our present "failure." The history of thought is not a success story, and it is vulgar to consider it in those terms. Were we to deal with our problems as effectively as the great Victorians dealt with theirs, we should have little to complain of.

[8] Another comparison might be made with 19th-century England. The administration of an Empire or of "global power"—*they come to the same thing*—is more attractive to a certain type of man (and those not the least talented) than business or industry. Any country enjoying this kind of preponderance is bound to find that government service provides an excitement and a sense of power lacking in other activities. The periodic rush towards Washington from University and Corporation certainly seems to demonstrate that this is the case in the United States.

Thus, world power uses up a certain portion of human resources which might otherwise be available for other occupations. It also creates a caste with its own ethos which will differ significantly from that of the businessman.

[9] "When Virtue Loses All Her Loveliness", reprinted in *On the Democratic Idea in America* (1972), pp. 90–106.

[10] *Leviathan* (ed. Michael Oakeshott, 1946), p. 82.

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widespread disenchantment with the apparatus of the modern state and with the political devices which connect it to society. It is these latter which impart to the governors an imperative, and through which they themselves establish an acceptable framework of law and order or intervene to divert social forces in directions which they deem desirable.

However, for all these aspirations and alienations, it is hard to see what alternative exists to such an authority. There is no historical example of a general and undifferentiated participation in government, and the fashionable contemplation of primitive tribal organisation may be emotionally satisfying, but remains intellectually deceptive. To quote Hobbes once more:

> ". . . it is men and arms, not words and promises, that make the force and power of the laws."

It is also the political institutions of the United States and the men whom they produce who will have both to accept and to transform the choices made by the average American citizen. Accept them because, while political leadership can do something to change the public response to immediate challenges, there is little it can do to affect long-term metamorphoses in sensibility or belief. Transform them because there is always a balance to be struck between such choices and the facts of any situation. If, for example, Macrae is right, and the present disaffection from "business values" and economic growth is liable to damage the United States, then it is for the state to mitigate effects which it perceives as harmful but is unable to reverse.

IT IS A PITY, therefore, that Norman Macrae's second report says so little about the present state of American political life and institutions. For the political metal fatigue from which the United States has appeared to be suffering in recent years must be set alongside the changes in sensibility discussed above, if a general view of the American future is to be descried. It is easy enough to be sick of Watergate, disgusted by its commercial exploitation and to feel that the sooner the American people succeed in putting it behind them the better it will be for all of us. None the less, this was a neuralgic point of recent American history; and it would be strange if it did not have something to tell us. It is all the odder that there has been little analysis so far of the profounder causes of the Watergate affair, since it does not require much knowledge of history to believe that such an investigation cannot stop at the turpitude of Richard Nixon

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and his ignorant and unscrupulous aides.[11] In fact, there are discernible reasons for what happened which should cause Americans to reflect on the quality of their own political life as well as throwing some light for the rest of us on an episode which was certainly not just the result of individual paranoia.

Among those reasons might be adduced: (1) The sheer power of the Presidency—an institution which, as one conservative American historian has put it, "unites power, drama, and prestige as does no other office in the world." Significantly, "Presidential Power" became a fashionable phrase towards the beginning of the Kennedy administration, and, since the power in question was world-wide as well as domestic, it is not surprising that it should prove distracting as well as intoxicating.

(2) The endowment with portions of that power of a Presidential staff composed of inexperienced, highly ambitious, and hence potentially unscrupulous young men. Watergate would probably not have occurred had there been a permanent presidential secretariat with traditions and taboos of its own.

(3) A political opinion which accepts as a matter of course the sexual or financial misdemeanours of senior Congressmen and which was remarkably unbothered by the "dirty tricks" (including wire-tapping) carried out in 1964 and 1968 by Lyndon Johnson against the Republican candidates.[12]

(4) A transfer of the intensely competitive Protestant business ethic to the political sphere. The willingness of the Nixon White House to resort to *any* strategem to defeat its opponents or save its own reputation undoubtedly stemmed in large measure from a recognisably puritanical sense of mission which could easily be persuaded that the end fully justified the means. Nor is this surprising since the President himself and those

[11] An experienced and reputable journalist like Theodore H. White *does* explain it entirely on this journalistic level in his book *Breach of Faith: The Fall of Richard Nixon* (1975). His last word is "Richard Nixon still had not learned the way America works." This is all very well, but political systems cannot depend on the best possible material being thrown up to the top. The "founding fathers" of the American constitution took a much more realistic view of politics and politicians.

[12] As a matter of political tone it is interesting to recall that, in his best-selling political novel *Advise and Consent*, Alan Drury represents one Senator as blackmailing (and eventually driving to suicide) another Senator over a wartime homosexual relationship. No critic, as far as I know, regarded this as an unrealistic portrayal of in-fighting in the US Senate; and the incident was maintained in the Hollywood film of the book.

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immediately around him came from precisely the kind of small business milieu in which such values find their last refuge.

ONE WAY OF REGARDING the Watergate affair, therefore, is as a consequence of the persistence, in a particular political environment, of values that are increasingly felt as anachronistic in late 20th-century America. Significantly, the tactics used by Mr Nixon's staff against their political opponents resembled those employed earlier against Ralph Nader by a great American corporation. As the late Sir Denis Brogan pointed out many years ago, in America it has usually been business which has shown politicians the way to dishonesty.[13] Lockheed's dealings with its customers is only one verse of an old song—by no means its end. In any case, a sense of mission derived from a dying Protestant ethos, an intense competitiveness switched from its economic context to political life, certainly played its part in Richard Nixon's catastrophe. In the case of his Vice-President, Spiro Agnew, a rather conventional scandal resulted from the symbiosis between politician and businessman which has been a familiar enough feature of the American scene in the past and will presumably continue to be so in the future.

THUS THE FULL COMPLEXITY of the problem identified by Norman Macrae becomes visible. The decay of values handed down from a Puritan form of Protestantism and usually described as the "work-" or "business-ethos" is now placing a question-mark over the future of the most complex advanced industrial society in the world. That question can only be answered positively through the proper functioning of political institutions which, as we have seen, have been adversely affected by an anachronistic survival and transfer of the decaying values themselves into the highest sphere of political action known to Americans. Thus: modes of belief, which had their usefulness for the task of exploring and developing a continent, become harmful when they intrude into political life.

No doubt, this was always so. But it is especially the case when the view of life which they represent is being abandoned by large sections of public opinion. At times it appears as though we had been witnessing a somewhat bitter comedy

[13] How much one misses the profound knowledge and humane wisdom which informed his writings about the United States! What would one not give to read him on Jimmy Carter! What would he not have made of the baroque detail—exploding seashells and depilatory sabotage—in the Senator Frank Church Committee's hearings on the CIA!

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of two Americas: the Emersonian, "anti-growth", liberal America of an upper-middle class which resides in suburbs and university towns and has in its custody culture, education and technology; which forms the bureaucracies of government, college and foundation, those who reflect upon international affairs and social improvement. And, on the other hand, the competitive, entrepreneurial America, impelled by an obscure sense of mission and a desire to find a place in the sun, an America of small businesses and ethnic groups which have not yet found social acceptance; an America uncultured and still intensely individualistic and, for that reason, subject to paranoia; an America which finds in politics a way to rise and a vessel into which to pour its own discontents; an America perhaps dying and, in any case, less fitted than its rival for the business of modern administration and government.

WHATEVER THE VALIDITY of this antithesis, it should by now be clear that the nexus of beliefs which dictates political and social action in the United States is complicated in its nature and ambivalent in its effect upon reality. These conflicting currents of thought and feeling can no longer be mobilised to produce, as a primal task, the maximum of economic efficiency. The institutions—corporation, government, community—named by Norman Macrae as determining the future of the United States would seem, indeed, to require rather different types of ethical inspiration if they are to work: more Emersonian for the community; more rationally positivist, in default of Puritanism, for the corporation. And ultimately, it will be for government, for the political institutions of America, to mediate between divergent beliefs and the different social groups that hold them. In 1977 a new President will once again have to remake the Republic. It is the glory of the American political system that that purgative operation always remains possible.

THROUGHOUT these remarks much has been said about modes of belief and their effect on social behaviour. For, in the final analysis, societies are only comprehensible if there be taken into account, not merely the direction and the definition of belief, but also the degree of its intensity.

A great deal of what we see today in the United States as in other Western industrial societies results from the decay of "strong" transcendental belief which has left behind it a residual ethical

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system—much as a plant withered at the root might still show some leaves and flowers at its extremities. This is to say that many of the ethical imperatives which still condition our societies are liable to be transitory in their effect. Professor Robert Nisbet has recently noted the appeal of various types of syncretic religion for the young in America; and, if he is right, then one could imagine that new transcendent justifications were on the way to strengthen weakened ethical systems before confusion and decay have gone too far. What these future moulds of human habit will produce can only be surmised, but merely to allude to this aspect of things to come is to suggest that the destiny of Industrial Society in the late 20th century may include phenomena far too novel to be easily recognised or taken into account in this era of history.

In its Bicentennial year the United States still has lessons to give Europe, but perhaps those lessons no longer convey the rational teachings of the Enlightenment. If so, they will be all the more instructive at a time when we can detect the intrusion into the calculable processes of our own European societies of strange beasts and bizarre angels.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Conflict in Africa—By LUCY MAIR

WHEN JOHN HATCH interviewed him in 1961, Nyerere said that independent African states, having no cause for mutual hostility, should set an example to the world by renouncing armaments. In the Lusaka Manifesto of 1969, he and Kaunda urged that the transfer of power from white minorities should be accomplished by peaceful means. But this time there was a proviso: Africa—all Africa—must have freedom, and if this could not be attained peacefully, as it was in Tanganyika, it would be fought for. When Helen Suzman saw him in 1971, according to her biographer, Nyerere unequivocally supported force as a means of effecting change in South Africa. She understood the "emotional background" of his attitude, "but could not agree with his revolutionary solutions." Who misunderstood him, Hatch or Suzman? The Lusaka Manifesto did not indeed preclude his unconcealed support for Frelimo and now for Zipa.

Certainly Africa is far from peaceful today. Sixteen years after Sharpeville, Soweto has initiated the same sad cycle of (this time violent) protest, bloody repression, grudging concessions apparently offered and at once withdrawn, more violence. But this time the Africans of the Republic have allies on their borders with armaments from still further afield. The independent African states are hardly more pacific. Some confront each other across frontiers, others are engaged with their own citizens. Refugees from *coups d'état* plan their return from bases outside, and sometimes actually mount expeditions. Even wars of liberation are fought by rival forces. Conflicting ideologies may be freely chosen, but they are more closely linked with sources of weaponry than some like to admit.

MOST OF US PURPORT to seek peace and ensure it, but the question whether we value it above justice depends on what we are getting out of it. The Sorelian theory of the ennobling experience of violence, as Frantz Fanon applied it to Algeria, has been the inspiration of the rebels against Portugal. In Guinea-Bissau, where for twenty years the PAIGC controlled more than half the rural area, keeping the Portuguese beleaguered in the towns, they *had to* "build the new society" as they pursued the war. Someone had to be in authority. Political indoctrination was, of course, part of the war effort, as it is with the guerrillas on Rhodesia's frontiers. If camaraderie in arms does not change men's hearts as thoroughly as Fanon supposed, at least there is a likelihood that conquest by force will make a greater break with the past than that peaceful transfer, sought and attained in quite a number of colonies, in which black rulers have stepped straight into the shoes of white ones.

This is the merit of revolutionary war in the eyes of Basil Davidson, who learnt the lesson as a fighter with the Partisans in Yugoslavia. Davidson must be the only Englishman to have tramped the bush with African commandos in both Guinea and Angola; he is one of the few writers in English to have presented the case of Portugal's African subjects. He became secretary of the Union of Democratic Control when Kingsley Martin was chairman, at the time in 1950 when they intended "to begin to work on African problems in the way they worked on Chinese problems in the past." As an amateur historian he has made the general public aware of the long past of pre-colonial Africa and the glories of the early empires. He has lent his support to the

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theory that Africa—how much of Africa?—would be in better case today if, unlike the rest of the world, it had been left to develop in its own way without external interference, and this is in line with the newer economic theories which assert that foreign investment in Africa has done nothing but undermine indigenous systems of production and trade.

Davidson's sixtieth birthday was celebrated by a "seminar" in the University of Edinburgh. Most of the contributors to *African Studies Since 1945*[1] were historians, and their common theme is the trend of thought and writing about Africa in the past 30 years. Those which consist almost entirely of summaries of work published during that period must have been a little soporific if they were actually read. But one or two deal in a more general way with the present condition of Africa and rival interpretations of its recent past. Fanon's thesis is not directly cited, but Thomas Hodgkin describes the inevitable process by which oppression leads to revolt, revolt is brutally suppressed, breaks out again and is still more brutally suppressed—and yet must triumph in the end. Must it? How far away is the end? How far from the beginning must the inevitable revolt be? Why should not a state armed with modern weapons maintain itself indefinitely? Hodgkin makes no mention of internal support for the just cause, nor of the external circumstances that at other times have contributed to the success of revolutions; nor of the possibility that revolution may not end oppression.

Ann Seidman discusses the new economic theories that have been evolved to account for the disappointing results achieved in the "development decade", notably those of the neo-marxists —Claude Meillassoux in France, Samir Amin (from Egypt) in Senegal—and those American advisers who have long been advocating more and better socialism as the way to make economic growth a cause of social development, and not, as too many observations show, a source of high incomes for a minority while the great majority are still at subsistence level. André Gunder Frank is not to be found among her references, but "dependency theory" and "the development of underdevelopment" are her themes. A. G. Hopkins, in an essay delightfully titled "Clio-Antics", invites economic historians to cast their net wider, to examine such questions as ecological change, whether man-made or independently constraining men, and the adaptation or resistance of belief systems to the anomalies that new experiences create. Dependency theory, he argues, is "some way in advance of the evidence needed to validate it." It fits the history of the last three centuries, but even here it does not account for the economies which *did* develop from dependency to independent growth—North America, New Zealand, Japan, *et al.* It is too rigid, too certain that there is everywhere a common process with a common outcome.

> The dependency theory opposes one exaggeration with another; it asks too much of the evidence in explaining underdevelopment solely in terms of the European presence, in presenting international trade as a zero-sum game, and in denying the possibility that more than token industrialization can result from a relationship of dependency.

What is needed is not a theory of dependence, but a theory of interdependence which leaves scope for a variety of outcomes.

KAUNDA AND NYERERE weigh peace against justice. Hodgkin puts justice before everything. It is not only, but it is largely, the beneficiaries of the *status quo* who give the priority to peace. Africa has set up its own Organisation of African Unity to settle disputes within the continent without the overt diplomatic intervention of the super-powers. The OAU readily asserted the principle of inviolability of the territorial boundaries with which its members attained independence; it has been little more effective in upholding this than the United Nations in its wider field. It has attracted the attention of international lawyers, and one of them, Mrs Adda Bozeman, has advanced a curious explanation of the attitude of Africans towards peace.[2] *We*, she says (and some of us may be surprised to learn), make "the unqualified assumption of a need for peace", while for *them* "conflict is part of the inner normative order." From a mass of ethnographic data, indiscriminately gathered and selectively interpreted, Mrs Bozeman concludes that it is their non-literate culture that produces this different outlook; in such a culture people believe in magic and do not draw clear distinctions between war and peace, conflict and accord, or even appearance and reality. In Africa order is "institutionalised unequivocally in terms of controlled conflict", a summary of Evans-Pritchard's analysis of the feud that makes nonsense if it is applied to any traditional African state, and has certainly never been formulated by any Africanist. Even the rules of peace in the market, which some have seen as closely parallel to those of medieval Europe, don't count because people sometimes fight at markets.

It is rather disconcerting to go on from the

[1] *African Studies Since 1945*. Edited by CHRISTOPHER FYFE. Longmans, £7, paper, £3.50

[2] *Conflict in Africa*. By ADDA B. BOZEMAN. Princeton University Press, $27.50, £22.25; paper $12.50, £10.15

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supposed idealisation of conflict to an equally extensive account of processes of conciliation. If a contrast is being drawn between peace-loving literates and conflictful non-literates, one can only wonder how America, Russia and South Africa have come to be involved in the internecine wars of Angola, and why Holden Roberto so long adjured his followers to refrain from violence as long as there was a possibility of peaceful dialogue with the Portuguese. But the explanation is that "conflict control" is not expected to end conflict but to alternate with it. Africans do not assume "that power ought to be challenged by morality; that strife must be countered by law; and that war is to end in peace." It is an uncanny experience to find the words of one's own friends misinterpreted to this degree.

AS INDEPENDENCE APPROACHED, the optimists found reasons why elected governments in Africa should not be overthrown by military coups as they had elsewhere: the officers had been indoctrinated with the idea of a non-political army, they were not the only educated élite, their tiny forces could not do much in any case. Nobody perceived the importance of a non-political expatriate high command. Once that was removed, Africa did not lag behind the Middle East and Latin America. By this time the phenomenon has become so common that political scientists are looking for a general theory to explain it. One such, drawing its inspiration from Latin America, is that the army is the repository of the highest patriotism, and its officers are driven by conscience to intervene when they see the state going to rack and ruin: Franco's argument. Less idealistic is the view that the army, as the only coherently organised institution, is drawn into the vacuum created by the collapse of civilian structures. African soldiers, Samuel Decalo tells us,[3] are neither high-minded nor well organised, nor do they represent their country as a whole. They are riven by cleavages, and those who have won power are more concerned with keeping it than with the reform of the polity.

He illustrates his argument from the history of four states, three francophone, Dahomey, Togo and Congo (Brazzaville), and one anglophone, Uganda. In Dahomey there were six coups in nine years. Granted that there are many sources of political instability in the new states, the immediate cause in nearly every case has been some high officer's decision to forestall action against him-

[3] *Coups and Army Rule in Africa.* By SAMUEL DECALO. Yale University Press, $17.50, £12.70; paper $4.95, £3.65

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self, and one result has invariably been a vast expansion of the army pay-roll. Rarely has anything been done to remedy the ills that were adduced in justification of the coup. Most military régimes are unstable because the officers themselves are divided by ethnic and personal rivalries. Of Decalo's type examples only Togo, with its nationalised phosphate industry, has been able to dispense enough patronage to secure continued support. There is little hope of a return to civilian rule; to surrender power would be to invite reprisals. Nigeria's case is not discussed in any detail.

FOLA OYEWOLE WAS ONE of four Yoruba officers serving a prison sentence at Enugu for alleged complicity in the Ironsi coup, who were released by Ojukwu at the time of his secession. A thoroughly professional soldier, he served through the civil war on the Biafran side, seeking, by his own account,[4] to create islands of order in an ocean of chaos. The story recalls the good soldier Schweik, or, at Mars-to-earth distance, *August 1914*. No officers, no discipline, no strategy, no lines of communication, no intelligence, no supplies. "A soldier was lucky to get more than five rounds of ammunition to go into battle." Recruits in training rarely had any at all. Oyewole tried to prevent aimless firing at Federal planes, and was accused—as a suspect Westerner—of ordering that they should not be shot at; his Yoruba provenance was seldom forgotten.

As for strategy, Biafra "just thought of invading the mid-west without any idea of what to do next", and after they were driven out they were on the defensive for the rest of the war. Some units moved out of Benin on the strength of a rumour, before the Federals entered the town. But the fall of Nsukka was kept secret, and shelling within earshot was ascribed to the testing of home-produced weapons by Biafran scientists (in Uganda the analogous explanation is even more charming; if citizens hear shooting it is General Amin and his family practising with the latest invincible fire-arms). They did devise an effective anti-personnel mine, and there were some successful counter-attacks, but ground could never be held for want of ammunition. White mercenaries expended it at an alarming rate; they retreated at an alarming rate too. Some, among them Rolf Steiner, trained commandos, who came to form an élite corps and then thought they need not obey superior officers in other units. Some held up a Federal advance on the Cross River. But in Oyewole's judgment they did little on balance for Biafra; and they were thoroughly

[4] *Reluctant Rebel*. By FOLA OYEWOLE. Rex Collings, £3.50

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offensive to their African paymasters. When the war ended the Nigerian authorities ruled that Oyewole had been illegally released from prison, and he was returned there, in Lagos this time. How he got out in 1974 is not told.

IN THEIR POPULAR IMAGE, Kaunda and Nyerere, of the five "front-line presidents" of southern Africa, are the men of peace. John Hatch has written a Plutarch-style double biography,[5] giving his two subjects alternate chapters. Much of his book goes over familiar ground, but every new study brings the record a little further up to date. Since the two leaders have been in a position to put their political philosophy into practice, their policies and the consequences flowing from them have been a matter of interest to the theorists of development and under-development. Both would claim to be socialists, though Kaunda prefers the name "Humanist."

Nyerere clings fastest to the belief that laws can prevent men from seeking material advantage, and that all men wish to, and can, take a share in solving their own problems. From René Dumont he has learnt the value of small advances in agricultural technique, from China that of the village cooperative. He aimed to have all Tanzania organised in *ujama'a* villages by 1976. Over-zealous party officials used rough methods to meet the target date, such as he himself would not have countenanced. This last statement is surely true; but we badly need some real assessment of the balance of choice and compulsion, success and failure.

Kaunda's first policy statement followed hard on the Arusha Declaration. He too hoped to create a society without poverty or inequality; he too sought to turn the tide of materialism, or what others might have called the pursuit of economic opportunity, which had gone further in wealthier Zambia. He too urged the political leaders to live simply and show a sense of responsibility towards the masses. He has had to face difficulties as great as Tanzania's poverty: ethnic divisions among his followers, the cost of sanctions against Rhodesia, reprisals for help to nationalist guerrillas. He still stands firmly with Nyerere for *No Independence* (for Rhodesia) *Before Majority African Rule.*

BUT FOR A BONNY FIGHTER—one who, much of the time single-handed, could adopt only pacific means, but who is deeply committed to them in principle—we look to Helen Suzman, for 13 years

[5] *Two African Statesmen: Kaunda of Zambia and Nyerere of Tanzania.* By JOHN HATCH. Secker & Warburg, £6

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the only representative of the Progressive Party in the South African House of Assembly.[6] Her enemy has been *apartheid* ever since she submitted evidence on the problem of migratory labour to the Native Laws Commission in 1947. From the time when she was elected in 1952 South Africa has relentlessly pursued this unattainable aim, up to the creation of the "homelands" in which alone Africans have any political rights.

Helen Suzman's argument for economic integration was essentially the liberal one: that higher standards for all would come from the participation of all races in the development of South Africa's vast natural resources, not from the monopoly of skilled employment by the Whites. At first she and her friends thought the United Party could be liberalised from within. What drove them to secession was the line it took on the return of land to African occupation promised in the Native Trust and Land Act of 1936; it was never intended, the argument went, to be given to independent Bantu states, so now it should not be given at all. Verwoerd asserted that only the creation of the Progressive Party made the 1961 election necessary, and invited his supporters to annihilate it. They did; but they did not unseat Helen Suzman, who fought on alone, the target of puerile but no less painful insults from government and opposition alike. The 1974 election brought her colleagues back with landslide victories, and a few months later they merged with a new Reform Party created by a further secession from the more and more conservative United Party. So the non-violent struggle against oppression goes on; side by side, now, with violence from the oppressed themselves.

[6] *A Cricket in the Thorn Tree: Helen Suzman and the Progressive Party*. By JOANNA STRANGEWAYS-BOOTH. Hutchinson, £5.95

The Owl & the Water-Beetle

Thinking About the British Crisis—By FERDINAND MOUNT

THE LIGHT at dusk is bad, the owl of Minerva's departure time notoriously ill-chosen. Familiar objects look black and threatening against the setting sun. The cloud-banks are drenched in blood. Bats flit out of the belfry, apocalyptic, shadowy creatures of weirdly exaggerated proportions. Twilight is the time for omens and visions.

Crisis, we hope, sharpens our thinking, forces us to re-examine with unusual urgency the traditions and assumptions by which we live. But does it? Can we lay claim even to the ghostly detachment of the owl, planing, however myopically, above the level of events? Are we not equally liable to behave like Hilaire Belloc's water-beetle?

> *He flabbergasts the Human Race*
> *By gliding on the water's face*
> *With ease, celerity and grace;*
> **But if he ever stopped to think**
> **Of how he did it, he would sink.**

The water-beetle who suddenly realises the danger of the element in which he swims and the fragility of his existence is likely to lose both his nerve and his balance. The consciousness of his situation, instead of leading to desirable re-appraisal and realignment, leads only to a collapse of confidence in the old bases. He panics.

Nor are the reactions of the owl and the water-beetle mutually exclusive. Myopia and panic are all too often merged in the "ideology of crisis." Between them the owl and the water-beetle can prove fatal. The loss of balance combined with a diminished perception of reality makes it difficult to develop a steady and broad perspective, either historically or internationally. If comparisons are made at all, they tend to be dragged in to prove the unique seriousness of *this* crisis and the impossibility of spontaneous recovery or favourable transformation, thus making the panic worse.

AT THE PRACTICAL LEVEL, the first impulse is to denounce the existing political system as exhausted, moribund, warped by the ravages of time, beyond hope of repair. In the case of the British crisis the most concrete sign of this tendency has been the revival of support for Proportional Representation and Referenda. Joe Rogaly in *Parliament for the People*[1] records that the two previous occasions on which PR nearly came to Britain were in 1918 and 1931—both times at which politicians were drained of self-confidence and the will to govern, and seemed baffled and doubtful of their ability to work the existing system. Similarly, the referendum was suggested by Balfour and others during the 1910–1911

[1] *Parliament for the People*. By JOE ROGALY. Temple Smith, £1.85

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Lords crisis and again by Baldwin in 1930. The call for PR is as much a *symptom* of crisis and loss of nerve as a remedy. Correspondingly, existing Parliamentary electoral systems are scapegoats for crisis. If a PR system itself ends in disaster, then PR may be the scapegoat. The British blamed the PR system used in the Weimar Republic for the emergence of Hitler and the Nazis. Mr Rogaly in his vigorous and lucid handbook-cum-tract rightly points out that PR had nothing to do with it and that if the British first-past-the-post system had been adopted in 1919, Hitler would probably have won a majority of seats in the Reichstag.

The present coalition of interests urging PR have various reasons for their enthusiasm. The Liberals, as always, wish their Parliamentary representation to correspond more nearly with their popular vote. Christopher Mayhew in his pamphlet *The Disillusioned Voter's Guide to Electoral Reform*[2] expounds this view with partisan snap. The group of powerful businessmen who have recently espoused PR are interested primarily in the cause of *consistent* government. Their main grievance is the impossibility of planning ahead when fiscal, monetary and industrial policies are chopped and changed so frequently. The Tory supporters of electoral reform are concerned above all to keep the extreme Left away from the levers of power. For this security they are prepared to pay the price of more or less continuous coalitions with the Liberals or other parties of the centre.

These reasons are not necessarily inconsistent with one another. Mr Rogaly himself subscribes to all three. But the arguments supporting them demand separate and sceptical examination. Multiplicity of rationale is not enough. Nor is it enough merely to abuse the first-past-the-post system as "ping-pong politics", "fruit-machine politics", or "roulette politics." The evidence is abundant and far from conclusive.

If Weimar PR is not to blame for Hitler, then why should PR take the credit for West Germany's post-war success? If PR is fair to smaller parties, why have small parties been gradually eliminated in West Germany? If PR leads to consensus politics or government of the centre, how is it that the Communists in Sweden were able to tug their Social Democratic partners to the Left? If the first-past-the-post system abhors coalitions, how come, as Mr Mayhew points out (beguilingly arguing against himself), that in the 30 years up to 1945 there were five coalition governments in Britain lasting a total of 15 years? If Holland and Belgium do so well

[2] *The Disillusioned Voter's Guide to Electoral Reform.* By CHRISTOPHER MAYHEW. Arrow Books, 60p

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on party-list PR, why doesn't Italy? Mr Rogaly says:

> Italy is in truth a special case; its failures are the result of specifically Italian social, economic and political circumstances, and this would be true whatever system of voting they chose to use.

But isn't Britain a special case too? Rogaly admits this, but contends

> it is just that here we can now see how a move to fairer voting might make it easier to tackle some of our many other problems, while removing some of the particular problems caused by sham two-fisted two-party scrapping.

Which problems and why? And why hasn't two-party scrapping stopped in other countries?

IN THE END Mr Rogaly seems to be driven back on uncharacteristically chauvinist abuse. Italian politics are "untidy." The French are "naturally argumentative." Only the tidy, unargumentative Irish, along with the Maltese, the Tasmanians and the Australians (when voting for the Senate), are blessed with what he calls the "super-vote", the single transferable vote. And even the Irish are watering it down, the ungrateful creatures, by reducing the size of multi-member constituencies, which has the effect of making it more likely that the successful candidates will be the ones with the most first-preference votes—just like the old infernal fruit machine. The Irish are apparently just as uncomfortable with the idea that "tepid" second-preference votes should decide a close-fought election as others are distressed that minor parties with a high popular vote should be under-represented in Parliament.

The concepts of "fairness" and of "a wasted vote" are much less straightforward than PR advocates imagine them to be. For example: in X-voting each MP is elected for a single constituency by first-preference votes only; under STV some MPs are elected by first preferences only and others by a mixture of first, second and even third preferences; under the double vote, some MPs are elected directly by constituencies, others are nominated by a party machine. Which system is the fairest? Equally, the doctrine that the losing side has wasted its time has disturbing, even sinister implications. After all, the simplest way of ensuring that everyone votes for the winning side is for there to be only one party. Wastage, like fairness, is partly in the eye of the beholder.

THE TRUTH IS OF COURSE that PR in almost all its forms can give satisfaction in favourable circumstances. So can first-past-the-post voting. Granted a broad franchise and genuinely free elections, it is implausible to attribute a nation's failure or success to its particular brand of electoral mechanics. The springs of good or bad government lie deeper and elsewhere.

The same reply goes to those who place their bets on the referendum as the means of reviving British democracy. David Butler and Uwe Kitzinger, in *The 1975 Referendum*,[3] point to the fact that the EEC referendum was Britain's most spectacular departure from the principles of parliamentary government for nearly 300 years. At the same time, they seem only mildly interested by this. They are far happier describing the pedestrian routine of the publicity organisations established to run the campaign. They appear bored and uncomfortable with the constitutional and political issues, eloquently though these were often aired at the time. This dismal book, uniform with the Nuffield studies of British General Elections, can be excused only on the grounds that the referendum was in fact much less important than it looked.

The process of voting on a specific issue certainly was exhilarating for both Yes and No voters, and many people came out with the feeling that they would like to repeat the experience. The result was sufficiently in doubt to endow the event with political drama. Yet after reviewing the unique circumstances, I am led to wonder whether the experience does not ultimately emphasise how much on the periphery of parliamentary government the referendum is bound to remain. Either the subject chosen is itself peripheral—by which I mean it is a subject which may arouse strong feelings but which does not affect the general direction of government or the configuration of parties (*e.g.* abortion, divorce, liquor licensing laws)—or the verdict of the referendum is peripheral to the political process which generated it. This is not to say that referenda are merely dictators' toys, but rather that the decision to hold the referendum, its timing, and the framing of the question direct the answer to an extent which will usually prove decisive. The kind of referendum held and the answer it gives can only reflect the kind of government prevailing. If the referendum is *an* answer to a crisis of government, it is unlikely to be an important answer.

That crisis is generally agreed to be located inside the governing British Labour Party. Other parties may face tactical or doctrinal problems (the Conservatives on incomes policy, the Liberals on electoral strategy), but these are the normal stuff of politics. Only the Labour Party is agreed by friends and critics alike to be suffering some special climactic agony. One view, exemplified by David Howell in *British Social*

[3] *The 1975 Referendum*. By DAVID BUTLER and UWE KITZINGER. Macmillan, £7.95

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Democracy,[4] is that the Labour Party represents a tradition which is played out. After Harold Wilson was defeated in 1970:

> Most clearly it was evident that the social democratic inspiration was dead. It had been nurtured after 1931, it had had its heroic hour after 1945, and it had failed to give guidance since then. It had been built around a belief that major reforms could be achieved piecemeal within the existing system, and it had held together a motley coalition with its blend of short-term benefits and future-oriented idealism. Now the vision had withered, the potential for major reforms seemed virtually dead and the coalition showed signs of disintegration.

The Labour Party, we are told, is finally paying for its failure to consider at any time a more fundamental challenge to existing power structures than is offered by parliamentarianism (such unwieldy phrases are the New Left euphemisms for revolutionary action). In Mr Howell's version of history, the Labour movement is alternately hoodwinked and betrayed; commitments to nationalisation are eternally being shelved; the fiendish Morrison thwarts all efforts to democratise those few industries that are taken over; Gaitskell, "the great confrontationist", is constantly trying to winkle out the last traces of socialist principle. A party conceived and led in so perverse a spirit deserves to be doomed.

Curiously enough, Mr Howell nowhere really comes to grips with the concept of social democracy. Now and then, he talks vaguely of the "tension" or the "rift" between the commitment to parliamentary methods and the commitment to socialism, as though this were an unexpected inconvenience instead of being the heart and soul of the matter. Moreover, he staggers about under the weight of a confused obsession about "revisionism", failing quite to grasp that there always was in that term more than a hint of light-heartedly metaphoric allusion to Soviet experience. Gaitskell may indeed have been trying to purge the party of its "traditional rhetoric" as enshrined in Clause IV, but he was not trying or did not think he was trying to revise the general direction of the party or the shape of the mixed economy traditionally if inexplicitly envisaged by the party. He wanted to clarify and codify the party's aims as they had been sanctified by practice, which would, if true, have prevented a *real* revision in a socialist direction. So long as those aims remained clouded by ambiguity and sentimentality, they offered an opening to the Left.

[4] *British Social Democracy*. By DAVID HOWELL. Croom Helm, £6.95

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THIS POINT IS CLEARLY MADE by Stephen Haseler in *The Death of British Democracy*.[5] As a second opinion at the bedside, Dr Haseler's prognosis is even more sweepingly grim than Mr Howell's, though from a quite opposite standpoint. For Haseler, the tragedy was not Gaitskell's leadership but his early death. The pygmies who have succeeded the fallen hero have let the party go to ruin.

> The social democratic consensus . . . is fast becoming past history. It is breaking asunder. . . . Social democrats themselves, like Parliamentarians and Parliament, have often been their own worst enemies. They have watched the totalitarian beachhead being established within the Labour movement as if they were the transfixed, demoralised troops of an army that since Gaitskell's death has been leaderless.

There is no historical necessity about this. In West Germany political leaders like Helmut Schmidt have found little difficulty in energising the tradition. The "exhaustion" of social democracy is a purely British phenomenon. We are just too "wet" to survive—an unnerving echo of Mr Heath's favoured epithet of disapprobation. Militant moderates like Dr Haseler tend to be immoderate at least in their scorn for "the third-rate political arts of showmanship, compromise and manoeuvre." They are impatient of political systems which, they believe, prevent their views from achieving an otherwise untrammelled triumph. John Stuart Mill, we should recall, favoured not only PR but also plural voting for the educated.

Dr Haseler's all-embracing polemic was published in April 1976, presumably finished therefore towards the end of 1975. Already some of its conclusions are beginning to look a little rusty, its metal struts already fatigued by the stress of events. Not that things are looking up but rather that they are not looking down in quite the same way. Once again, the reason may be that the evidence is drawn from too short a period and without leisure for evaluation and comparison, any distortion being exaggerated by the influence of other polemics or overstrained theses (Correlli Barnett, Cecil King, Butler and Stokes, Goldthorpe are among those invoked). The contention, for example, that both the major parties, but particularly the Tory party, are set on a long-term decline looks odd at this moment (I write in the wake of the by-elections at Walsall North and Workington—two huge Tory gains, two lost Liberal deposits). Some of the portents of anarchy that Haseler adduces look black only against the unusually quiet years that came before them. Comparisons about political strikes are particularly swampy terrain (the number of working days lost through any kind of strike has dwindled to a remarkable low). Many of the antics of the left-wing majority on the NEC are not quite as startlingly new as they may appear in the heat of the moment. But the greatest danger of all is to invent a myth of the Labour Party's golden past, as Haseler does.

Tom Forester's valuable short essay, *The Labour Party and the Working Class*,[6] shows clearly that the Labour Party has changed much less and declined much less than is now usually supposed, largely because in many constituencies there was never much to decline from. Mr Forester also provides a convincing refutation of the claim made in Barry Hindess' influential treatise, *The Decline of Working Class Politics* (1971), that the middle classes have taken over many constituency Labour Parties. The Party in fact remains, much as it always was, a not very effective machine for winning General Elections in the interests of the working class as those interests are perceived *by* the working class. As Forester says, "too many writers on the Labour Party have been concerned with prescriptive statements about what it ought to be rather than what it actually is."

THE DANGER OF THE MYTH of the golden past is that it induces a disproportionate sense of hopelessness when confronting the shambles of the present. Unfortunately, some of the loss of nerve that Dr Haseler excoriates in his fellow social democrats has crept into his own outlook. Despite his admiration for the West Germans, he fears the political consequences of adopting a West German economic strategy in Britain. It remains a central weakness in his thesis that he attributes the problems of social democracy almost entirely to political cowardice and very little to economic folly—which is easier to remedy. After all, even the supposedly moribund Labour government which he so much despises is making some efforts to move in the direction of a social market economy. Sometimes even politicians are braver than their academic critics.

This last reflection is also prompted by *The Conservative Opportunity*, a collection of essays edited by Lord Blake and John Patten.[7] In a characteristically robust introduction, Lord Blake asserts that "there are signs of one of those rare and profound changes in the intellectual climate which occur only once or twice in a hundred

[5] *The Death of British Democracy*. By STEPHEN HASELER. Elek, £5.95

[6] *The Labour Party and the Working Class*. By TOM FORESTER. Heinemann Educational, £3.75

[7] *The Conservative Opportunity*. Edited by LORD BLAKE and JOHN PATTEN. Macmillan Press, £7.95, paper £3.95

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years." So there may be, but you would not guess it from most of his fellow-contributors, who tend to deplore the present trend of events while listing as many reasons as they can think of for doing nothing about it. In some cases, their suggestions for reductions in government expenditure and for rolling back the advance of the state are scarcely more ambitious than those of the present government. Dogmatic verve is not an unmixed good, but political argument does require a minimum of intellectual energy, and with the exception of Vernon Bogdanor's thoughtful remarks on education and Lord Gowrie's sophisticated discussion of the tactics of industrial relations, the general quality of argument is sapless and rambling.

Better evidence for Lord Blake's claim is that, like other rare and profound changes in political atmosphere, this has been preceded by a stir and rumble of *theoretical* activity, at first neglected and sporadic but now unmistakable and widely acknowledged even by the defenders of the reigning orthodoxies. This revival of political philosophy is vividly demonstrated by *Contemporary Political Philosophers*.[8]

[8] *Contemporary Political Philosophers*. Edited by ANTHONY DE CRESPIGNY and KENNETH MINOGUE. Methuen, £5.50, paper £2.75

Of the dozen political thinkers discussed, only three—Marcuse, Sartre and Macpherson—belong to the old left wing of the pantheon, their niches deeply pitted with mortar fire, their outlines already crumbling and lichen-covered. The remainder—Hayek, Leo Strauss, Voegelin, Oakeshott, Popper, Jouvenel, Aron, Arendt, Rawls—have, except for Popper, not yet been elevated to Kermodish Modern Masters. Yet they already constitute an informal tradition which flows broad and deep. Half-a-dozen others might just as well have been chosen—Berlin, Talmon, Mises, Friedman.

To group these figures into a tradition is not to strain too hard for neat labels or shared ways of thought. To call them liberal-conservative or even constitutional-pluralist (Aron's more exact phrase) is only to isolate a certain resemblance in the practical derivations of their work. But in their return to classical roots and classical problems, their assertion of the manifold, distinct and complex nature of human life and human endeavours, they have had a common impact upon modern political philosophy and increasingly upon modern political practice by breaking down rigid totalitarian and holist preconceptions and restoring a broad and subtle historical perspective. The essays in this compendium are all valuable; Dante Germino on Eric Voegelin is the most

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illuminating, Noel O'Sullivan on Hannah Arendt the most pointed.

O'SULLIVAN HAS ALSO contributed the volume on *Conservatism*[9] to J. M. Dent's series, Modern Ideologies. The ideological approach has the virtue of permitting a clear and easy-running exposition of conservatism as an embattled theory thrown up by the necessity to provide a coherent opposition to the French Revolution and its successors. The defect of this virtue is its isolation of the ideology from the matrix of the disposition to conserve out of which it sprang, thus allowing conservatism to be defined by its opposition to rationalist doctrines of perfectibility. Granted the task he has allotted himself, though, Mr O'Sullivan carries it out with eloquence. D. J. Manning has more trouble with *Liberalism*[10] in a companion volume, becoming so badly tangled with the problems of delineating the properties of an ideology that he has little space left for liberalism itself. His main purpose is to establish a total separation between an ideology and any academic discipline such as history or political science which, he claims, cannot possibly impinge upon fanatics bent on changing the world rather than describing it. Ideologies cannot be refuted by adverse instances, they can only persuade or fail to persuade. They grow and decay under the pressure of events, not the pressure of academic proof.

This separation is surely too absolute. The hold of ideologies is weakened by adverse cases, whether constructed by controlled, purposeful academic study or presented haphazard by the course of events. The fact that people may continue to cling to a discredited ideology does not mean that the ideology is ultimately impervious to testing; it merely means some people are obstinate. The conspicuous failure of the proletariat to be progressively impoverished by capitalism does weaken Marxism, both in theory and in the minds of its honest supporters. Manning's contention that in the face of unwelcome evidence ideologies merely wriggle into a different shape is to accept dishonesty too tamely. Moreover, what Manning chooses to call the "symbolic form" of liberalism looks more like the outward husk of a core of belief about the right relationship between the individual and the state, which ought to be capable of rigorous examination. The over-use of the concept of ideology is an escape from proper analysis of the composition and coherence of beliefs about society.

Nor are the methods of academic social science necessarily as impeccable as, intentionally or not, Manning's contrast with the lawless certainties of ideology implies. When disconcerted by events, is not the academic social scientist just as tempted to rebuild his model as the fanatic to remould his ideology? Each fresh assumption that has to be built into that model is an unacknowledged indication of inadequacy. Antony Downs's vastly influential economic theory of democracy, although barely 29 years old, has already been so remodelled and built on to by a variety of hands that even his admirers are arguing about what exactly the theory is supposed to indicate. Is it that parties try to win elections by stealing as many of their opponents' clothes as they can without being caught—which is disproved by the example of Goldwater's nomination? Or is it, as Giovanni Sartori contends in *Parties and Party Systems*,[11] that parties actually do win elections by adopting this strategy—which is disproved by Heath's 1970 campaign? No doubt these and other hard cases can be disposed of by building in still more assumptions, but of making many models there is no end. To the layman there seems an irritating slipperiness about the discussion which affects equally a substantial work like Sartori's and a more restricted thesis such as David Robertson's *A Theory of Party Competition*[12] or, on a different theme, Robert D. Putnam's *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*.[13] Not that the quality of thought is thin. Sartori, in particular, is a hardheaded operator, precise and undeceived in his judgments. The sense of unease appears to be generated more by the comparative method itself.

THE STUDENT OF COMPARATIVE POLITICS seems to snatch his material from its diverse local historical contexts with little regard for its origins. The British Conservative Party, the Indian Congress Party and the Polish Communist Party, say, are not merely three different kinds of thing; it is impossible to understand exactly in what way they are different without embarking on historiographical enterprises so huge that there can be little intellectual room left for comparative sociology. Without a firm historical grasp, superficial similarities of behaviour between political parties in divers settings can prove totally misleading. Very often the narrower the

[9] *Conservatism*. By NOEL O'SULLIVAN. Dent, £4.50, paper £1.75

[10] *Liberalism*. By D. J. MANNING. Dent, £3.95, paper £1.75

[11] *Parties and Party Systems*. Vol. I. *A Framework for Analysis*. By GIOVANNI SARTORI. Cambridge University Press, £15, paper £4.50

[12] *A Theory of Party Competition*. By DAVID ROBERTSON. John Wiley, $15.30, £6.95

[13] *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*. By ROBERT D. PUTNAM. Prentice-Hall, $10.40, £6.55

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comparison, the more persuasive and illuminating it is, because the narrowness permits a longer historical perspective on the things which are being compared. Robert McKenzie's *British Political Parties* (1955), to take a well-known example, does manage to show that the Labour Party works more like the Conservative Party than it would care to admit (though perhaps less like than McKenzie claims) because it establishes so clearly Labour's Parliamentary roots. A general theory of party may not be impossible any more than a general theory of political élites or any other of the many fields of comparative study now being brought into cultivation by ploughing grants from the universities and foundations. But such a theory cannot be based on synchronic research alone. Political history can get along without political sociology; but political sociology without historical perspective is an enterprise both shrivelled and risky.

If crisis does teach anything, it is that events are not isolated conjunctions of behaviours. Even through the dusk, the owl can look down on the first faint beginnings of the path into the abyss. And with our twitching water-beetle's legs we get a vivid sense of what a hostile, difficult element water can be—a sense we never had in calmer times. It is at this moment that political philosophy, for so long pronounced clinically dead, stirs and rouses itself from what was perhaps only a dangerously extended afternoon nap.

Where in the World?

American Foreign Policy—By DONALD WATT

SOME DAY, SOMEONE will have to make a study of the long love-affair British intellectuals have been having with the American people for most of this century. It has not, of course, always been plain sailing. The course of true love has run no smoother in this affair than in any other. The beloved has been captious, flirtatious, inconstant, insincere, cruel, unworthy of so great a love, deceitful, a vulgar slut even. But the obsessive nature of the emotion felt by her British admirers has continued. The latest addition to the literature of this long-lasting affair is Henry Fairlie's *The Spoiled Child of the Western World.*[1] The subtitle, *The Miscarriage of the American Idea in our Time* effectively explains Mr Fairlie's plaint against his love. But it has in no way diminished it. Mr Fairlie still believes in the fundamental virtue of his inamorata and is prepared to remain true.

The last decade has been a bad one for Americans too. The triumphant victory of President Johnson over Senator Goldwater did a little to redeem things. But for many lovers of America, as for many Americans themselves, the virtue left their country that terrible day in Dallas in November 1963. Compared with John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson was a country boor and a bully. And where Kennedy had controlled American power and provided a Presidential front of which Americans could be proud, Johnson made Congress his lackey, plunged America into the never-ending morass of Viet Nam, presided over an America whose university campuses could only be kept orderly by tear-gas and rifle-fire, whose cities dissolved into riot and looting, and whose public men and public places could at any moment fall victim to murder by gunfire. Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Jimmy Hoffa were murdered, Governor Wallace crippled. The 1968 Democratic Party Convention was accompanied by scenes of riot and violence that might have come from Jack London's pen. And when Richard Nixon became President in 1968 after Lyndon Johnson's withdrawal from politics, the Presidency itself fell victim to the miasma of corruption which appeared to be spreading over all America's institutions. Pilferage, leak, and breach of official secrets revealed the principal organs of the US Army and Johnson himself to have lied to each other as well as to the American public. This was to be followed by Watergate and the ruin of the Nixon Administration. The so-called liberal press led the muck-raking knocking chorus. A black gloom descended on America, bitter with the suicidal pessimism of Feiffer's cartoons. Only the literary satirists, the Gore Vidals, could be said to be enjoying themselves.

It is hardly surprising therefore that, in the month in which a previously unknown Georgian politician with no backing from any sizeable group in the Democratic Party could capture first his party's nomination and then a bare

[1] *The Spoiled Child of the Western World: The Miscarriage of the American Idea in Our Time.* By HENRY FAIRLIE. Sheldon Press, £4.95; Doubleday $8.95

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majority of his countrymen's votes with a Presidential campaign based essentially on his claim to stand for honesty and integrity against the existing structure of government, there should appear a group of books all basically concerned with the State of the American Nation, of its domestic and of its foreign affairs. Nor, since it is the outsider who sees most of the game, should it be surprising that it is Mr Fairlie who provides the most interesting, idiosyncratic and far-reaching analysis of them all.

To Mr Fairlie American society is uniquely different from European not merely in its assumption of classlessness. It is that the lack of a hierarchy established by history means that the individual American can only be whole if he is also a full citizen, if his private philosophy is united with his public philosophy. If the private and the public are not united in him he is an Ishmael, lonely, miserable and unable to achieve the goals to which he is dedicated.

In Mr Fairlie's view this aim is innately achievable for Americans, but the bases for its achievement have been destroyed by the growth of two factors. The first is a *trahison des clercs* which has inflicted on America a whole range of ideas and ideals which are fundamentally opposed to the maintenance of a public philosophy and which have led to the neglect of human welfare. America is, says Mr Fairlie, an idea—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness: an idea which needs constantly remaking and restating, which looks back for inspiration so as to look forward for its realisation. America has to be a democracy, the individual realising himself through his equality with all other Americans, in liberty and in equality in creative tension one with another, Whitman's "I" in the "*en-Masse*." This idea has not been realised in this century, a century in which America has become dominated by the commonality of the middle class, a middle class liberated from the harsh constraints of the struggle for existence by science and culture, a middle class free to experiment and only too willing to plunge into such "permissive" experimentation.

In this experimentation, *pace* Mr Fairlie, there has been a constant and conscious retreat from a public philosophy into an idealised adolescence. The multiplication of sects, the "movement", the self-conscious cult of loneliness and alienation, the cultivation of inhibitions to speech as a guarantee of sincerity, the rejection of politics and public service, the cult of the "drop-out", Zen—all are examples of the self-indulgent retreat of the affluent, aided and abetted by the rationalisations provided in literature, pop sociology, and pop culture which Mr Fairlie holds as one of the two great betrayals of the American promise.

The other factor, according to Mr Fairlie's indictment, is the emergence of an upper segment of the middle-class commonalty that is set on developing socio-economic exclusiveness, the 30 million, the one-seventh of the American population for whom the other six-sevenths must work. The stratification of society is becoming more rigid not less, the one-seventh expecting deference. Symptoms of this process Mr Fairlie discovers in the pretence that poverty exists only among the racial minorities, in the attack on remedial education, in the neglect of the city centres, in the destruction of public transport facilities, in the systematic retardation of the minority groups, in the attack on universal public education, in the growth of a meritocracy based on university education, in the gradual withdrawal from politics and an acceptance of political conformism, in the systematic denigration of leaders and political figures who do not come from the ranks of the vital seventh and in the glee with which the lapses of such leaders, an Agnew, a Humphrey, a Johnson or a Nixon are pounced upon. Antagonism to the "hard hats" Mr Fairlie sees as the incipient threat of the development of "Two Nations" in one.

The connoisseur of British-American romance will not dismiss this out of hand; though I can imagine it going down with a leaden thud in Ivy League staff clubs or suburban country homes. Clearly embedded in this analysis is the cry of the British fugitive from his country's obsession with class and caste, the great British bore and universal excuse for all failure. It is however instructive to reflect on some of the "commonalty's" victims; especially since the appearance of Doris Kearns' remarkable and intimate study of Lyndon Johnson.[2] It is as well before reading it to remind oneself of LBJ as he was when in his prime, a barbarian, a bully, a boor and a braggart, a man who once remarked, "I never trust a man unless I have his pecker in my pocket", a man who delighted to humiliate those who served him by subjecting them to nudity, demanding they attend his defecations; a man who terrified even Washington bureaucracy into discretion.

It is no easier to like him after reading Ms Kearns' study. (For that matter it is not all that easy to like Ms Kearns who reveals the makings of a good lefty prig in much of what she assumes to be the common ground between herself and her leadership.) Yet it is impossible not to see in Ms Kearns' by no means unskilful account that

[2] *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream.* By Doris Kearns. André Deutsch, £6.95

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Johnson was one of the great tragic heroes of our time, destroyed by his strengths as much as by his weaknesses, and conscious throughout not only of what was happening to him but of its inevitability.

The Johnson she depicts in no way belonged to the middle-class commonalty depicted by Mr Fairlie, despite the wealth he accumulated. He began as the son of a small-time farmer who had married out of his social class. He ended as a Texas rancher. Most of the intervening life he spent in politics in Washington without even the apprenticeship in local politics which has stood so many American leaders in such good stead. All his life he laboured under the feeling that the world of the intellectuals, the East Coast Ivy League especially, was closed to and hostile to him, and that, no matter what he did, he could not win their approval which, above all, he wanted. But he was conscious also of the needs of America, especially the need for a more just distribution of the rising abundance America enjoyed in the 1950s and early 1960s. The programme he dubbed the "Great Society", a phrase cribbed from, *inter aliis*, Walter Lippmann, represented just that concern for public welfare Mr Fairlie finds to be lacking in mid-century America. Its progress was interrupted, then destroyed by America's involvement in Viet Nam; as Johnson knew it would be. Yet he could not but intervene.

IT IS AT THIS POINT that Johnson's tragedy began. Ms Kearns confirms what was already well known—the tendency of all sides in the Viet Nam debate to argue from bad historical analogues. George Ball, who resigned over the issue, tells us in his most recent work, of which more later, of an enormously complicated historical analogy, drawn from the history of Tonkin in the late 18th century, for an American withdrawal without loss of face, a plea he urged on President Johnson in June 1965. Ms Kearns quotes Johnson, speaking to her in 1970, basing his intervention on the lessons of the 1930s, the need to avoid appeasement and resist aggression, the need to avoid repeating the errors of 1946–67 in China which destroyed President Truman's effectiveness and led to the rise of Joe McCarthy. To this he added two further fears; first that American inaction would have been taken as a hint by Russia and China that they could expand their control into the power vacuum that inaction would have created and would thus begin a new world war; and, second, that inaction on his part would have been used as a springboard for attack on him by the surviving New Frontiersmen led by Robert Kennedy. According to Ms Kearns, Johnson felt acutely uneasy in the presence of the

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leading figures of the US foreign policy establishment, men such as Dean Rusk, McGeorge Bundy, Walt Rostow, Maxwell Taylor, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, all of whom urged on him the historical and the current arguments in favour of intervention.

Ms Kearns and George Ball for that matter are so confident of the correctness of the alternative view of Vietnamese politics (what one might describe as the Franco-Halberstamian-Fitzgeraldine view) that both feel that bad history and the doubts of his own masculinity were the only reasons for Johnson's decision to intervene, ignoring or turning on its head the opinions of the principal western experts on South Viet Nam who agreed unanimously on two points: the inability of South Vietnamese political institutions to stand the strain of American intervention, and the almost uniform rejection by all strata of society in the South of the arms, methods, rule and leadership of the government in Hanoi and its Viet Cong allies. Indeed in Mr Ball's version the unsuitability of South Vietnamese institutions to sustain the war-making potential and organisation of a modern western state is itself adequate justification for abandoning them to the tender mercies of the Viet Cong.

What neither seem prepared to admit is that it was the American military, including the air force, and their civilian strategic and sociological advisers who made such a cock-up of President Johnson's original decision by their advocacy of bombing, of playing the numbers game on results, and by their insistence not only on fighting a mass industrial war in Indo-China but on arming the South Vietnamese to do the same. The result was a limited colonial war which cost the US several times more *per diem* than did the Second World War, an act of such total lunacy that one feels only the fate of Admiral Byng would be adequate reward for those military advisers who were responsible.

Nor will they see that, before the invention of the "smart bomb", the US Air Force simply lacked the technical ability to execute the strategy they recommended. In December 1972 one air attack of pin-point accuracy on Hanoi cured the Vietminh of its belief that time was on its side and led to the signature of the Paris accords. But at no time between 1965 and 1968 did the US Air Force possess that kind of accuracy. Nor did the US strategic advisers, at any level, political or military, grasp that for the rulers in Hanoi the university campuses in America, the streets of Washington, New York and Chicago, where no single uniformed Viet Cong ever trod, were the real battlefields on which America was to be defeated. As for the bombing, Professor Ernest May of Harvard, of Texan origin like Johnson himself, has shown in his *Lessons of History* (1973) how faulty history was cited to justify the strategy followed in Viet Nam.

The crowning irony of Lyndon Johnson's tragedy is that the clever university-trained intellectual establishment whose enmity he feared and of whose confidence in their own cleverness he was the reluctant prisoner were neither clever nor had they used their intellect to reason clearly. Lyndon Johnson was the victim of a latter-day clamjampherie of Ivy League King Jameses (though without, very definitely without, the saving grace of his prose style).

AMONG THOSE LATTER-DAY King Jameses one would definitely have to number both Mr Elliot Richardson and Mr George Ball. Mr Richardson is an erudite Boston Brahmin, of worthy manner, second-rate intellect and unshakeable integrity, the Attorney General who resigned rather than cooperate in President Nixon's dismissal of the Watergate prosecutor, Mr Archibald Cox, when the latter was getting too near the truth for comfort. His recipe for American recovery[3] is neither novel in its analysis

[3] *The Creative Balance: Government, Politics and the Individual in America's Third Century*. By ELLIOT RICHARDSON. Hamish Hamilton, £5.95

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nor original in its recommendations. Moreover, it is informed throughout with that air of benevolence in Government towards the common people that is the common hallmark in Britain of the reformist Tory and the Wykehamist socialist, a compound of high-mindedness and high principles so condescending in its *de haut en bas* tone that one has to remind oneself forcibly that no one can be blamed for always looking downwards if they are born and bred above the social snow-line.

With Mr George Ball the reminder is provided in the sub-title of his book.[4] America is, as Mr Fairlie has already pointed out, as much an idea as a country and much more an idea than Britain or even France save on the lips of a de Gaulle. To subtitle his book an "American" foreign policy, as Mr Ball does, is to issue a double, nay a triple, warning.

Imprimis, this is intended to delineate a foreign policy based on ideological criteria.

Secundo, this is intended to warn us that policies of which Mr Ball disapproves (and Mr Ball is mightily disapproving) are not "American", perhaps could even be labelled un-American.

Terzo, it is to warn us (although Mr Ball fails to realise this) that his tract is for Americans only, a contribution to, if not a correction of, an internal intra-mural purely American debate in which, as is usually the case in such debate, an opponent's policy may be criticised for its ineffectiveness but a policy that is advocated is justified by its concordance with some, to an intra-mural American, acceptable ethic. The present tense of Mr Ball's first conjugation runs "my policy is American, yours is non-American, his is a failure."

BRITISH AND EUROPEAN OBSERVERS of American foreign policy in the first half of the 1960s greeted the news that Mr Ball was prominent among Governor Carter's advisers on foreign policy with considerable misgiving. Not only would they remember his previous book, *The Discipline of Power* (1968), a combination of political memoire and prescriptive recommendation in which as one wag observed the Power was American, and her friends, associates and allies were the objects of the discipline; they would remember too his record, as the most outstanding advocate, among President Kennedy's advisers, of the use of American leadership to impose union on Europe. Not only did he so confuse the Bermuda meeting of President Kennedy and Mr Macmillan at the end of 1962 as to destroy any remote chance Mr Macmillan might still have had of persuading General de Gaulle that he had not abandoned control of Britain's nuclear forces to the USA; but he spent the next two years or so attempting to ram down the throats of America's partners in NATO the Multilateral Nuclear Force—a seaborne force of mixed-manned ships carrying *Polaris* missiles, which no European wanted, no European believed in, added no element of any significance to the strategic deterrent, and was predicated on an expectation of political developments in West Germany drawn from a simple equation of Bonn with Weimar.

To do Mr Ball justice, the MLF was not his brain-child. It was invented in a bad moment by Professor Robert Bowie. But Mr Ball prolonged its active life with an energy that would have better been directed to something useful, and contributed to the virtual paralysis of West European politics between 1963 and the onset of the CDU-SPD Grand Coalition. In so doing he may very well have given strength to the *Ostpolitik* of which he is so contemptuous. One must presume that the democratic control of foreign policy he advocates implies the control by American democracy of the foreign policies of all her allies and associates, democracy being for Americans only. Perhaps his book should be retitled *Diplomacy over a Crowded World.*

What Mr Ball cannot realise, or cannot accept,

[4] *Diplomacy for a Crowded World: An American Foreign Policy.* By GEORGE W. BALL. Bodley Head, £5; Atlantic, Little Brown, $12.95

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is that whatever Dr Kissinger's faults (and to European eyes he is far from faultless), his great merit is that he has occasionally tried to envisage the world as it appears from Bonn, Paris, the Hague, Rome and London, as well as from Peking, Moscow, Cairo or Jerusalem. To many Europeans, his provisional constructions, step by step and half unfinished though they are, are a refreshing change from Grand Designs; to many, he was most at fault when he lapsed into the great American error, rightly castigated by Mr Ball, of mistaking oratory for diplomacy, as in the "Year of Europe" call; though why Mr Ball, who objects to the secrecy which is so indispensable a part of Dr Kissinger's diplomatic method, should see fit to castigate Dr Kissinger when he declines into public oratory is unclear.

AS A QUIETER REFUGE from Mr Ball's all-condemning, all-diagnosing, all-prescribing diplomatic pharmacopia, students of America's future foreign policy may turn with relief to the twelve essays originally presented as the Carpenter Fund's 1975 lecture series at Cornell University on the theme "US Foreign Policy and the Future."[5] The view is very much that of the British wing of Atlanticist foreign policy studies represented at the International Institute of Strategic Studies, five of the ten authors—Coral Bell, the late Professor Alastair Buchan, François Duchêne, Pierre Hassner, and Kenneth Hunt—being all closely associated with the IISS. Richard Rosecrance himself has been more than intermittently exposed to cisatlantic infection. The other authors come from the moderate pragmatic wing of the intra-US foreign policy establishment opposition.

The result is a series of moderate and tentative prescriptions, not all self-consistent, for American foreign policy on various issues and in various parts of the globe, the common factor in which is the slightly questionable view that America's stance should be that of a leader amidst a number of varied groups and alliances, a pluralist foreign policy of playing *primus inter pares*. Underlying this is the equally dubious assumption that the foreign policy of a nation can be scaled down from that of a super-power to that of a great power by a simple single intellectual act, like that of hopping from one diving-board to another some metres below it, and that the only obstacle is a public reluctance to accept such self-demotion. Since the British participants in this symposium

[5] *America as an Ordinary Country: US Foreign Policy and the Future.* Edited by RICHARD ROSECRANCE. Cornell University Press, $9.75, £7.80

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used to take a very similar view of the problems involved in reconciling Britain's commitments to Britain's resources in the long debate between 1958 and 1968, from Sandys to Healey, it is surprising they have not yet realised the real problem.

To adjust the expectations of one's own electoral constituency is by no means easy; but the real problem lies in the adjustment of expectations required of everybody else. It will take more than these ten worthies to bring Russia and China and India and Iran, Canada and Australia, Indonesia and Singapore, South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania and Ethiopia, Egypt, Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Greece, Jugoslavia and Rumania, Austria and Sweden, Spain, Portugal and Morocco, Cuba, Brazil, Venezuela, Peru and Argentina to accept that the minor and marginal changes and adjustments recommended by Professor Rosecrance and his associates, even if they were implemented, were both genuinely implemented and were as much of a downward adjustment as the United States electorate was prepared to contemplate.

To diminish one's effort in foreign relations is in itself as multilateral a process as the world to which that effort is being adjusted. And it involves not so much a downward hop as a toboggan ride over rough scree on an unending and precipitious downhill path. Stopping and being seen to have come to rest are much more difficult than starting.

AUTHORS

Gillian Tindall's most recent novel is *The Traveller and His Child* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1975).

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Herbert Lomas is a regular critic for *London Magazine*, and the author of *Chimpanzees are Blameless Creatures, Who Needs Money?*, and *Private and Confidential* (London Magazine Editions, 1974). The poems printed here are Parts IV, V, and VII of a seven-part elegy.

Peter Redgrove's most recent publication is his novel (written jointly with Penelope Shuttle) *The Glass Cottage* (Routledge, 1976).

Max Beloff was Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, Oxford University, from 1957–74; he is now Principal of the University College at Buckingham.

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Donald Watt is Professor of International History, Unversity of London. He is the author of *A History of the World in the 20th Century* (1969) and has edited many works on international affairs, including *Survey of International Affairs* and *Current British Foreign Policy* (Maurice Temple Smith, 1971, 1973).

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Art v. Experience?

Thomas Mann as Genius

By Marcel Reich-Ranicki

He was as touchy as a prima donna and as vain as a tenor. He was egocentric and self-satisfied, cold and consequential, sometimes even cruel.

Thousands of people bombarded him with letters in the course of his life, and none of these communications ever went unanswered. He helped many people, especially during his years of exile. But did he ever have a friend? Although doubtless capable of the human ties commonly called friendship, he was curiously unprepared to submit to them. Did he ever love a woman? Only his wife Katia, probably, though he soon asked her to return the letters he had written to her in order to use them in a novel (*Königliche Hoheit*).

Mann's Tonio Kröger complains that he often feels sick to death of portraying humanity without sharing in it. To Thomas Mann himself, the portrayal of humanity always seemed infinitely more important than any direct involvement in it—an almost incomprehensible imbalance which is possibly unexampled in the history of world literature. One is oversimplifying only a bit to say that he experienced almost nothing and wrote about almost everything. He knew how to extract a literary maximum from a minimum of real personal experience. His true genius may have reposed in the vigour with which, throughout his life and even during the last few months, he turned his great talents to account.

Not a congenial person, from the sound of it—rather repellent, in fact. Perhaps; but the same can be said of many other figures in our literature, of Goethe, Heine and Richard Wagner, of Rilke, Musil and Brecht. The only congenial men of genius are those about whom we know virtually nothing, like Shakespeare or Wolfram von Eschenbach.

The more we read about Thomas Mann, the harder it becomes to like this very German genius, this prodigious 20th-century encyclopaedist, and the easier to admire, nay, to revere him. Renewed confirmation of this can be found in his letters to two people whom he viewed with remoteness and indifference but used notwithstanding: Otto Grautoff and Ida Boy-Ed, one a boyhood friend, the other a well-known popular novelist of the last generation.

In March 1895, when he was 19 years old and already living in Munich, Thomas Mann wrote to Otto Grautoff, an ex-school-friend slightly his junior, who was studying to become a bookseller at Brandenburg an der Havel:

> "I have only ever been truly friendly, truly intimate, with one person, and that was you. By chance, perhaps. But congeniality enters into it too."

There was not a word of truth in this. The young Thomas Mann was never "truly friendly", far less "intimate", with Grautoff, nor could there be any talk of a *Wahlverwandschaft* between them. But the relationship was not a "chance" one either—it had a sound underlying reason. As the same letter puts it: "I cannot express myself to anyone as I could to you. . . ."

Grautoff was not only ugly and untalented but the son of a bankrupt. His more refined fellow-pupils "laughed at him, found him impossible and excluded him from their circle" (to quote Peter de Mendelssohn's informative preface to his carefully edited collection of letters).[1] Thomas Mann, too, felt ashamed of his "shabby, unprepossessing and doltish friend." But this unfortunate youth, with his potent inferiority complexes, was absolutely and unreservedly devoted to Mann. The fact that he could be addressed on any desired subject (and at any desired length) stemmed from a circumstance to which Thomas Mann gave candid expression in a letter of July 1897: "I have always esteemed it your one great merit that you can listen. . . ."

This is the disarmingly simple secret of the far from shortlived relationship between these two unequal partners, not only during their years at school in Lübeck but later on, when contact was limited to an exchange of letters. In other

[1] *Thomas Mann: Blick an Otto Grautoff und Ida Boy-Ed.* Edited by Peter de Mendelssohn (Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt, 1975).

Marcel Reich-Ranicki, *one of Germany's foremost literary critics, is feuilleton editor of the "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung".*

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words, Grautoff was neither a Pylades nor a Horatio, merely an audience required by the monologising hero—a supernumerary.

It would even be wrong to suppose that the youthful Thomas Mann regarded Grautoff's admiration or subservience as a form of self-confirmation. The young *Meister*, who had yet to prove his mastery, undoubtedly craved recognition and influence and aspired to be an authority. He could not, however, fail to recognise that these things were all too easily obtainable from Grautoff. He hadn't the slightest respect for Grautoff's intellect and he told him as much with a hint of sadism: "You don't know what metaphysics are and you don't know what Christianity is, yet you blithely use the words.... You shouldn't get involved in such discussions...."

But there is also a connection here with the feature that makes the letters to Grautoff so revealing. The young Mann had few inhibitions, repeatedly yielded to the urge to talk about himself, and he was not shy with the former school-friend who so obviously relished the part of a subordinate long-range factotum. "When I walk into the university reading-room, of which I am a member", writes the 19-year-old Thomas Mann, "they all nudge one another in awe. Then I'm really in my element. You know how childishly vain I am (*Du weisst ja, wie kindisch eitel ich bin*)!" Late in 1901, too, after the publication of *Buddenbrooks*, he speaks frankly of his thirst for glory: "There are times when my stomach turns over with ambition."

The young Thomas Mann's pronouncements about his (hitherto unpublicised) sex-life are similarly outspoken. In 1895:

> "I've almost developed into an ascetic of late.... What I say is, let's divorce the private parts (*den Unterleib*) from love!"

Meditating in Naples at the end of 1896:

> "What am I suffering from? From sexuality... will it be my downfall?... How do I rid myself of sexuality (*Wie komme ich von der Geschlechtlichkeit los*)?"

These letters also disclose that Thomas Mann was, from the first, a brilliant organiser of his own literary success. Late in 1901, Grautoff—now employed on the feuilleton of the *Münchner Neuesten Nachrichten*—received blunt instructions on what he was to write in a review of *Buddenbrooks*. He was told not only what he ought to commend but what he was at liberty to censure:

> "Be slightly critical (*Tadle ein wenig*)... of the despair and melancholy of the ending: one can sometimes detect a certain *nihilistic* tendency on the author's part."

Grautoff's review appeared some time later. Included in the appendix to the collected letters, it shows that he predictably and obediently confined himself to accepting Thomas Mann's terse but forceful requests and recommendations, which he expanded a little. The author of *Buddenbrooks* did not, it appears, send him a letter of thanks.

In fact, this review marked the end of Mann's relationship with Grautoff. The old friend had done his duty and was not required further. His place was taken by others like himself: supernumeraries and listeners, collocutors and correspondents who were ready and able to contribute their mite to Thomas Mann's renown. They fulfilled the same function, though on an increasingly exalted plane. It would seem that Thomas Mann tolerated no one in his immediate circle (the few exceptions hardly count) who could not be of use to him and his work. It would be as disingenuous to try and conceal this as it would be absurd to reproach him for it.

AMONG GRAUTOFF'S NUMEROUS SUCCESSORS was the Lübeck novelist Ida Boy-Ed. Peter de Mendelssohn's lovingly edited selection from her works[2] shows her to have been neither unintelligent nor untalented. Thomas Mann's letters to Ida Boy-Ed, who was 23 years his senior, span the period 1903–1928. They bear no comparison with the Grautoff correspondence. Exit the jaunty novice in quest of his own identity; enter the established author who selects a dignified and sometimes majestic turn of phrase for the most trivial communication.

One of the main themes of his letters is gratitude for copies of his correspondent's various books. In 1904, for example: "I find your little creation the very model of a realistic novella. I read it at a sitting, held constantly in suspense by its exceptional power of representation and enthralled by an illusion of reality of rare strength." 1910: "... beg leave to present my most respectful congratulations on this impressive achievement, which is among the very best and strongest of your works known to me." 1911: "It is touchingly beautiful, this book of life with its tender and profound perception of a woman's soul and the womanly soul in general. It is perhaps your finest novel."

Was there a single ounce of sincerity in the letter-writer's remarks? Whatever the truth, he made repeated use of Ida Boy-Ed. She provided his work with an accompaniment of largely enthusiastic reviews, regularly encouraged in this by Mann himself. When *Königliche Hoheit* (*Royal Highness*) appeared in 1909, he reminded Ida Boy-Ed that Napoleon had concluded every battle by wondering what the Faubourg St Germain would say.

[2] *Ida Boy-Ed. Eine Auswahl von Peter de Mendelssohn* (Verlag Gustav Weiland, Lübeck, 1975).

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> "Lübeck is my Faubourg St Germain. I always think: what will Lübeck say to this?"

The requisite review was not slow to appear. Thomas Mann, who had obviously resolved to use nothing but superlatives in his letters to Ida Boy-Ed, proclaimed that it was "one of the very best, most splendid, warmest and finest things" she had ever written.

Although Ida Boy-Ed overflowed with praise for *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918), the now pampered author was not entirely satisfied. In this case, he informed her, there had been an opportunity to

> "draw special attention to the element of native tradition, the ancestral quality, that dwells within me and flows from me . . . for example, with reference to the chapter *'Bürgerlichkeit'*."

The hint was taken, and a fortnight later Thomas Mann was able to render thanks for a "post-script" to the review of *Betrachtungen*.

However, on the rare occasions when Ida Boy-Ed took the liberty of expressing doubts about a book by Thomas Mann, the usually grateful author revealed an abrupt lack of courtesy. She was not, for instance, wholly in sympathy with *Der Zauberberg (The Magic Mountain)*, though her first intimation of disapproval was conveyed in a letter to the author. By now 72 years old, Frau Boy-Ed was harshly and brusquely reprimanded. Thomas Mann declared that he had work to do and could not raise the energy "to furnish the confused and irritated (*Verwirrte und Erzürnte*) with an apology for my life and doings."

IT IS HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT that the author's relationship with Heinrich Mann plays a major role in his letters to Ida Boy-Ed. As he announced in 1917,

> "The brother problem is the real, or certainly the most arduous, problem in my life. The combination of great closeness and violent inner repulsion is distressing. Kinship and affront, all at once. . . ."

Although it would be too much to say that these letters shed new light on a fraternal vendetta which has passed into the annals of German literary history, they do lend greater clarity to an aspect largely ignored by literary historians, perhaps because it strikes them as unduly banal and prosaic. All ideological, political and psychological motives apart, the long-standing feud had a professional undertone which, however secondary one regards it, should not be wholly dismissed: it was also a competition between two ambitious authors, each of them eager to outdo the other.

This element of straightforward rivalry is particularly manifest in Thomas Mann's letters to the woman who lived and wrote in Lübeck the brothers' native city. He writes in 1904:

> "Did you believe that I had some affinity with his things? . . . But the sentiment aroused in me by his artistic personality could not be further removed from contempt. Rather, it is hatred. His books are bad, but they are bad in so exceptional a way that they evoke impassioned opposition. I am not talking about the *tedious* immodesty of his eroticism, the vapid and unspiritual craving of his sensuality to leave nothing untouched. What enrages me is the aestheticising sepulchral chill that wafts at me from his books. . . ."

When Heinrich Mann's *Madame Legros* received its première at Lübeck in 1917, Thomas Mann deemed it right to persuade the local critic of the play's *Minderwertigkeit*. He spoke of the "wholly anti-German purpose behind this glorification of French revolutionary activism" and opined that it was "a mixture or hybridisation of aestheticism and politics which—I cannot help it—gets on my nerves more readily than most things. . . ." The theatregoers of Lübeck, who obviously liked the play, were called to order: they had failed to grasp its "intellectually doctrinaire" content,

> "a horrifying dogmatism, an aggressive self-righteousness, a Jacobinic harping on humanitarian principles so stubbornly intolerant as to be almost unimaginable."

Heinrich Mann's novel *Die Armen* (1917), admittedly an embarrassing failure of a book, was unfavourably reviewed in *Lübeckische Blätter*. With evident satisfaction, Thomas Mann declared: "I think he will be hearing more of the same, but I know of no one less amenable to criticism. This is founded on stupidity (*Dummheit*) and that is that." It is noteworthy that Thomas Mann, the self-styled "unpolitical", had a far better insight than his brother into the politically suspect feature of *Die Armen* and similar examples of contemporary literature, namely the "Unreality (*Wirklichkeitsfeindschaft*)" of "Expressionism applied to social criticism."

As has already been mentioned, however, Thomas Mann himself was unreceptive to criticism. In 1905 he confided: "I have a soft spot for all that is called *Kritik*—and I would never wish to overcome that love." True, but he disliked it when his own books were critically appraised. Writing to Ida Boy-Ed in 1918, he declared that he had never yet heard a critic say anything intelligent about his little *oeuvre*, his "*Lebenswerkchen*", that he had not already said himself. A provocative remark, perhaps, but is it wholly false? One simply cannot get around it: the author of the greatest body of novels in the German language was himself its finest critic.

Enough of quotations—there are plenty of them as it is. But "do not smile at my propensity to quote", said Thomas Mann in a lecture delivered in 1939. "Quoting, too, is a form of gratitude (*Auch das Zitieren ist eine Form der Dankbarkeit*)."

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LETTERS

Ferdinand Mount's "Fraternity"

FERDINAND MOUNT IN "The Dilution of Fraternity" [ENCOUNTER, October] does well to clarify the haziness which surrounds the idea of "brotherhood." But are there "so many alternative models or metaphors which could be used to express community and goodwill among men"?

Can we so conveniently speak of any other more-or-less equal relationship outside the family by way of extended metaphor—fellow-consumers, fellow-taxpayers, fellow-dole-receivers, fellow-workers, or even fellow-neighbours—in a manner which will be readily understandable or flexible in the variety of contexts in which we use the word "brother"? Or are we to resort to non-human biological or mechanical models? Admittedly the content of brotherhood is open-ended. It requires some goal or purpose to unite men in such an extended family. The dilution surely takes place in the absence of any such clear aim or in a lack of agreement amongst "would-be brothers."

It is easy to pick out the notoriously bad cases of blood-brothers—Cain and Abel, Eteocles and Polynices, etc. But could it not be argued that they are notorious because they were so unbrotherly? Why not add that Menelaus and Agamemnon were also brothers; that one of the three examples of truly happy men described to Croesus, the wealthy king of Lydia, by Solon of Athens were two dutiful brothers; that the first two revolutionary martyrs (and well-recognised members of the Marxist pantheon) in Roman politics, the Gracchi, were two brothers; that the first four disciples chosen by Jesus were two sets of brothers?

The simple fact is that "brothers" can typify the best in close cooperation between men as well as the worst in bitter hatred, rivalry, and jealousy. If non-blood-brothers have also shown this ambivalence of character it should not surprise us; but it does not invalidate the ideal of the "good brother."

Nor does it seem plausible to suggest that "to establish intimacy is to flee from fraternity." The only really comparable bond to brotherhood is friendship (not so much passionate love) which implies a degree of compatibility, similarity of interests, similarity of temperament, and affection which is usually both more restricted and deeper than that between "brothers." The tension between these two concepts is significant. We may believe that all men should behave as good brothers to each other, but we cannot expect that they will all be equally good friends with each other. This is surely because "brotherliness" is a moral concept. The common purpose in pursuit of which men have regarded themselves as brothers whether as Pythagorean mystics (the pre-Platonic prototype), medieval guildsmen, or trade-union members involves certain duties or an accepted sharing of effort which may often generate closer ties of friendship rather than reduce the members of such associations to mere cogs or ciphers. The need generally has to be seen as a strong one; and economic, political, or religious bonds seem to have produced the best examples. The idea of a state-brotherhood looks usually too vague, and I suppose this is why Communist governments have not overstressed the ideal of fraternity.

The New Testament story of the Good Samaritan is about a quite different theme—that of how to show compassion to those in need. And here practical and monetary help are precisely what are required as the outward expression of compassionate feelings. But one cannot truly be a brother to a stranger with whom one shares no long-term purpose. On the other hand, monastic brotherhoods of a Christian origin do still survive after a remarkably long history. Also, if one looks to the tradition in Islam one finds that brotherhood is at the heart of the religion, and its duties have been described by various writers such as Al-Ghazzāli.[1]

Finally, I believe that much of the persuasiveness of Ferdinand Mount's essay may be due not only to its selectivity but also to the preferred use of the word "fraternity" rather than "brotherhood." "Fraternity" I would suggest is used in more trivial and light-weight contexts (e.g. of American students) than "brotherhood." There may be a verb "to fraternise" but there is no comparable verb in English derived from "brother", because I suspect "to behave in a brotherly way" involves so much more than mere fraternisation!

RASHID BALL

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DR BALL'S interesting letter further illustrates the elusive nature of the fraternal idea.

1. His examples of good brothers are, except for Solon's, not so much stories about *brotherhood* as stories in which good brothers happen to appear. In mythical terms the Gracchi are remembered for the tenacity of their *mother*'s love. What is to be remarked on in the calling of the Apostles is not that they included two pairs of brothers but that they were called away from their families.

2. Dr Ball is, I think, himself diluting the historical experience of fraternity. He underestimates the profound hatred of family and hierarchy which fuels the ideal of brotherhood when it is taken as a guiding principle. Much more than a decent standard of civic conduct is involved. The thoroughgoing fraternal society aims to *replace* entirely the old concentrated pattern of affections.

3. I don't believe there is any valuable distinction to be made between *fraternity* and *brotherhood.* By linguistic chance, there is no common English personal noun from the Latin root. Hence, we use brother and, consequently, brotherhood in deeper and wider senses. By historical accident, France gave birth to the modern political application of the idea. Hence *fraternité.*

4. The important distinction is between fraternity as the natural bloom on the relationship of a common purpose and Fraternity as an imposed dogma. The

[1] In part of his "The Revival of the Science of Religion" (*'Iḥyā 'ulūm ad-dīn*), recently made available in translation by Muchtar Holland as "The Duties of Brotherhood" (Latimer Publications, 1975).

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"natural" fraternity of club, trade union, party, creed does not exclude the particularity and intimacy of love, may perhaps even nourish it by providing a protective environment. Imposed Fraternity, on the other hand, is fiercely exclusive. It is this latter jealous god that I meant to describe.

FERDINAND MOUNT

London

Was Marx an Anti-Semite?

A Reply from East Berlin—By JOHN PEET

IN YEARS GONE BY, otherwise reputable writers frequently used derogatory expressions when referring to other national groups, and this is undoubtedly an interesting subject for study and analysis. But serious study is little helped by such contributions as "Socialist Anti-Semitism" by Max Geltman [ENCOUNTER, March].

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels undeniably used rude language, which most people today find objectionable, in many of their references to Jews. But it should certainly be noted that they were free too in their use of wounding words about Poles, Russians, Germans, Scots, English and others.

In his letter, Mr Geltman quotes a number of examples of "socialist anti-Semitism" in the works of Marx and Engels; but these examples contain an unusually high proportion of mistakes and misapprehensions. Some at least of these errors may arise from the fact that internal evidence shows that Mr Geltman is obviously not quoting from the original German, but from translations into another language using a non-Latin alphabet (perhaps Yiddish, Hebrew or Russian). This can be the only explanation for the fact that he spells a number of names wrongly in a phonetic transcription ("Schtensel" instead of Stenzel, "Likhnovsky" instead of Lichnowski).

But far more serious is the misinterpretation which he places on passages torn from context; they may of course only have been available to him in this truncated form.

Mr Geltman presents as evidence the following sentence, written by Engels in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* on 9 August 1848:

> "Rendered infamous far and wide . . . as a full embodiment of profiteering, miserliness and filth, they [the Jews] have suddenly become German brothers . . . "

But reference to the original shows that Engels is in fact making a scathing attack upon usually anti-Semitic German circles in Eastern Europe who had suddenly taken the Jews to their hearts when they wanted their cooperation in a dispute with the Poles. In context, the passage runs like this (in my translation from the German):

> "The unexpected sympathy and recognition which the Polish Jews have recently found in Germany is here officially expressed [in the preceding passage, trans.]. Bearing a bad name as far as the influence of the Leipzig Fair reaches, as the complete expression of huckstering, miserliness and dirt, they [the Jews] have suddenly become German brothers; simple Michel presses them to his heart amidst tears of bliss." (*Marx-Engels Werke*, Berlin/GDR, Vol. 5, p. 323)

Mr Geltman then quotes indirectly from the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of 29 April 1849:

> Both Marx and Engels accused the Jews of robbing churches, burning villages, and beating innocent Poles to death. . . .

The passage to which he is referring is too long to quote in full, but it is in fact mainly an attack upon the Hohenzollerns and the German Junkers. The essential passages run as follows:

> Finally, the beneficence of the fatherly Hohenzollerns . . . consisted of letting loose upon the defenceless trusting country [Poland] "our glorious army", in order, in alliance with the Jews, to plunder churches, burn villages, beat Poles to death . . . to the glory of God and His Christian-Germanic Majesty. (*MEW*, Vol. 6, p. 448)

Once again, a fuller version of the quotation than that given by Mr Geltman shows a very perceptible shift in the sense.

And finally, Mr Geltman claims that Engels used the word "Zhid", a derogatory Russian term for Jew. He states:

> "Engels found the word 'Zhid' easy to deploy, as when he wrote with some irritation to Marx (November 1864), 'I haven't witnessed so many Zhid intrigues simultaneously as at this time'."

But the original text of the letter referred to shows that in fact Engels wrote on 2 November 1864: "*So viel Judenschikanen . . .* " which means "so much Jewish chicanery" and nothing else (*MEW*, Vol. 31, p. 6)

Towards the end of his letter, Mr Geltman informs us that he is "now preparing the first Yiddish translation of Marx's essay on the Jewish question that first saw the light of day in 1844." One can only hope that this translation contains fewer errors than his letter.

Incidentally, Marx's controversial essay on the Jewish question is now easily available in English in a full and reliable translation. It may be found in Volume 3 of the 50-volume *Collected Works of Marx and Engels*, now appearing a few volumes at a time (Lawrence & Wishart, London; International Publishers, New York; Progress Publishers, Moscow).

As the further volumes of this monumental series

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appear, readers unfamiliar with German will be able to see for themselves what Marx and Engels really said about the Jews and about a host of other questions, instead of having to rely on selective and sometimes poorly-translated excerpts.

JOHN PEET

East Berlin
D.D.R.

The Webbs & Racism

More Replies & Ripostes

MARGARET COLE apparently considers my comments on Beatrice Webb's early writings about East End Jews as being "biased and unfair." In point of fact, I understated, if anything, the anti-Semitism of the Webbs which—as George Feaver (ENCOUNTER, September) makes clear—was part of their general predisposition to thinking in racial stereotypes.

In her reply, Margaret Cole does not deal at all with this fundamental point. Instead she brings up the old red-herring that anti-Semitism is not anti-Zionism, an issue which is peripheral to the whole debate. But since the subject has now been raised, allow me to quote the testimony of Chaim Weizmann (*Trial and Error*, London 1950, p. 411) concerning a conversation which he had with Lady Passfield (as Beatrice Webb then was) in London just after the 1929 pogroms in Palestine, during which 150 Jews were killed and many hundreds wounded.

> "What I heard from Lady Passfield was: 'I can't understand why the Jews make such a fuss over a few dozen of their people killed in Palestine. As many are killed every week in London in traffic accidents, and no one pays any attention."

To my mind, this illustrates precisely the kind of "refined prejudice and manifest ignorance" of Jewish life and values, to which I referred in my earlier letter.

What, moreover, is one to make of Margaret Cole's astonishing equation of negative racial stereotypes with the "animated *retailing* [a Freudian slip?] of 'Jewish' stories"? Her assertion that "The Chosen People . . . could hardly have expected otherwise" (why bring the "chosen people" into it?) sounds very biased to me.

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In Defence of Jean Jaurès

NO DOUBT your correspondent Max Geltman (Letters, March 1976) is correct in his ascription of anti-Semitic views to Marx and Engels, and even more surely so to Alphonse Toussenel (not Tousenel), author of *Les Juifs, rois de l'époque* (1845). But one must protest in the strongest way against his attempt to enlist the French Socialists of the turn of the century in the anti-Semitic brigade.

It is not even correct to be so categorical about Jules Guesde, although for reasons of political tactics he was reluctant to allow his party to become engaged in the Dreyfusard crusade. But to call Jean Jaurès an anti-Semite and an anti-Dreyfusard is an absurd and ignorant libel. It is true that Jaurès, along with all the other Socialist members of the Chamber of Deputies, signed the manifesto of 19 January 1898, calling on Socialists to refrain from taking sides in the Dreyfus Affair; this is the manifesto referred to in Mr Geltman's first quotation. This can perhaps be criticised, but it must be remembered that a politician is often forced to put his signature to forms of words with which he does not agree: the essence of political action is compromise. Individuals must sacrifice their own views in order to produce a lowest common denominator upon which effective action can be based. Jaurès, at this time, was trying desperately to weld the diverse Socialist sects into a united political party that could bring its weight to bear on the political scene.

The manifesto committed Jaurès and the Socialists only to neutrality, certainly not to joining the anti-Dreyfusard agitation. If this were all, it would be a rather weak defence; but in fact Jaurès, as is well known, was one of the earliest and most eloquent and effective defenders of Dreyfus. The Affair only really came on to the political scene in November 1897, and Jaurès had already written newspaper articles questioning the verdict of guilty, and demanding a full investigation. It was on 13 January 1898, that Zola's open letter to the President of the Republic, *J'accuse*, was published in the newspaper *L'Aurore;* and only then did the Affair become *the* burning political issue. The next day Jaurès spoke in the Chamber of Deputies in defence of Zola, and at least implicitly, of Dreyfus. It must be remembered that there were still enormous areas of mystery about the question, and, like the other Dreyfusards at this time, Jaurès was far from convinced that Dreyfus was innocent. But Jaurès was already identified with the pro-Dreyfusard agitation. He was in fact the first really prominent politician to be so identified; and he completely burnt his boats in this respect, with another speech in the Chamber on 22 January. H. Goldberg describes him that day in these words: "It was an Isaiah who mounted the tribune, flushed with anger, propelled by moral indignation."

Thus Jaurès' signature on the manifesto of 19 January comes in the middle of the opening moves of the pro-Dreyfusard agitation. At that times Jaurès

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was the only prominent political leader involved. His action is explained by Goldberg as entirely a tactical move to maintain formal unity among the Socialists. From the first he intended to twist its meaning. In fact, he ignored it completely, and paid the penalty of losing his Parliamentary seat in the general elections of April 1898. His support of the Dreyfusard cause was certainly a major factor in his defeat.

It is difficult to comment on Mr Geltman's second quotation, purporting to ascribe anti-Semitic sentiments to Jaurès, as he gives no details of its source and context. But I would suspect that it is as misleading as his reference to Jaurès' part in the Socialist manifesto of 19 January 1898.[1]

There could be no more unfair or erroneous description of Jaurès' role in the Dreyfus Affair than to say that "he said a few kind words about the Jews after the Dreyfus agitation had died down." Jaurès was, without doubt, one of the leaders of the pro-Dreyfusard agitation, and he was one of the first political leaders to join when the Affair became a political issue. Jaurès' prestige won over many other prominent political and intellectual figures to the Dreyfusard cause.

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[1] Precise references are not appropriate here, but chapter and verse for my statements can be found in such sources as: H. Goldberg, *The Life of Jean Jaurès*, (Madison, Wisc., 1962); A. Noland, *The Founding of the French Socialist Party, 1893-1905*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1956); J. Reinach, *Histoire de l'Affaire Dreyfus*, (Paris, 1901-8).

Beatrice Webb's "Racism"

DAME MARGARET COLE is quite right in asserting that one should not equate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism—but I, at least, have not done so. What I did suggest (September 1976) was that Sidney Webb's insensitivity to Jews while a practising politician (and one of the reasons MacDonald removed Ministerial responsibility for Palestine from him in 1930 was that there was an awkward by-election pending in predominantly-Jewish Whitechapel) is merely illustrative of a general tendency in Webbian thought to racial stereotyping.

We hardly need Dame Margaret's depressing reminder of the lengthy historical pedigree of "Jewish" stereotyping. What is interesting about her reminder is its strong resemblance to an apologia, and one would have expected such celebrated propagandists of the cause of international socialist brotherhood as the Webbs to have risen above the practice. Her comments about "the Chosen People" reiterate the discredited notion that Jews are themselves to blame for the adverse stereotyping deployed against them as a "race." We all know that the connection between that kind of argument and the unspeakable bestiality exercised upon millions of innocent victims in our own time in the name of "race-thinking" is only a matter of degree.

Dame Margaret says that "to observe that Sidney had 'a Jewish nose' is not evidence of hostility towards Jews in general." Perhaps not. But it will amuse close students of Webbian revisionism (and of Beatrice's notorious snobbishness) to note that in the literary portrait of her husband with which Beatrice introduces *Our Partnership*, the same facial protuberance that Miss Beatrice Potter had perceived to be "a Jewish nose" when she first met Sidney, had become by that later date Lord Passfield's "imposing Roman nose", which would "look well on a coin"! Why the change?

DAME MARGARET'S other comments are not directed at myself, but I will make brief notice of one or two of them. Firstly, while it is true that Beatrice was not strictly speaking a "socialist" at the time she undertook her East London studies, she certainly was by the dates of the various published references I cited (in support of the view that Jewish stereotyping and race-thinking in general form an important element in her thought).

Secondly, Dame Margaret herself provides an excellent example of Webbian race-thinking, in citing Beatrice's comment (2 September 1929) that "I admire Jews" (a *genre* of comment, incidentally, habitually uttered by the most virulently bigoted race-thinkers). The point is that we must set Beatrice's comment in context. What she actually says is "I admire Jews and dislike Arabs"—that is, in a choice between Arabs and Jews, she prefers "the ubiquitous" Jew. It is apposite that, ruminating on a separate Colonial Office matter several pages later, she describes the Indian Viceroyalty of Lord Irwin ("a simple-minded Christian nobleman") in highly favourable terms, contrasting it with that of Lord Reading, "a hard-grained, self-made Jew whose business it is to drive a hard bargain."

FINALLY, the same passage of the diary from which Dame Margaret draws the "I admire Jews" quote ends with a fascinating digression by Beatrice. She wonders whether the Palestine dispute doesn't raise the question whether in the end we shall come to

> "a scientifically-planned distribution of this planet's surface among different races according to relative fitness standardised by a controlled birth rate . . . coupled with anaesthesia for all unwanted infants."

Her triumphant conclusion is that "Then, perhaps, we could afford to be benevolent to all living Humans; we might even encourage variation of species, and experiment in breeding the Human Race." One suspects Dame Margaret would dismiss Beatrice's remarks as the innocent conjecture of a "student of society" plying her sociological trade. If so, it is assuredly an eerie innocence. I prefer to find in such passages an apt illustration of the manner in which the Webbs, like all race-thinkers, are more at ease dealing with big categories like "the Anglo-Saxon", "the Jew", "the Arab", "the Human Race", than with individual human beings.

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Manichean Antipathies

THE ATTENTION devoted to Beatrice Webb's antipathy to Jews is misplaced. What is much more important is her antipathy to all concrete human beings.

Whenever she was forced to take account of flesh and blood people she withdrew in revulsion. If they were Jews, the revulsion was expressed in "anti-Semitic" remarks. But she was at least as rude about the Chinese in San Francisco, the "half-washed and unshaved foreigners and Germans" at a concert in Germany, and "the men and women of the people" against whom she brushed on the Tottenham Court Road.

She never did Settlement House work, as her sister, Kate, did because she hated the personal contacts. She preferred the Charity Organisation Society, which Canon Barnett condemned for substituting "a relief giving machine for a helping hand" and Beatrice regarded as its great virtue.

The really evil antipathy felt by Beatrice Webb—which she shared with Marx—and which made her a Socialist, as she tells us, is her antipathy to personality, to thinking of men and women as persons, her preference for seeing human beings as groups of qualities "bound for a time in one form" (3 June 1883). When she became a Socialist she dedicated herself to serving "society at large rather than individuals", to "the Future—present persons seem to me so many shadows" (26 April 1890). That is the real inhumanity of socialism—as of Communism, Nazism, and all varieties of Manicheism.

SHIRLEY ROBIN LETWIN

London

"Italy's Ailment"

IT DOESN'T SEEM TO ME that Domenico Bartoli, in his article (ENCOUNTER, August) on "Italy's Ailment", has managed to free himself of the political virus infecting Italians. Choosing to see Italy's ailment as "upended patriotism", as the denigration of everything Italian by a generation of systematic "demolition men" who are themselves Italians, Bartoli remains within the limits of the unfortunate semantics of Patriotism and the rhetoric that evoked it with demands of *obedience*, *sacrifice* and *selfless devotion*. (I underline Bartoli's words.)

Bartoli exhibits the void of the Italian political consciousness: the failure to separate Church and State, as it were, the theological virtues from civic responsibility. A civic responsibility is founded, first of all, not on the pure flame of charity, not on obedience, fidelity and self-sacrifice (although it may and must at times rise to these absolutes), but on the solid ground of *enlightened self-interest*. The 18th-century Enlightenment touched Italy only lightly it seems.

In Bologna, Italy, an assembly of parents met at my daughter's middle school. They were enraged over the unconscionable squalor and physical danger of the surroundings: the ceilings of two classrooms were at the point of collapsing on their children's heads. These protesting parents were elegantly dressed and had come from apartments whose luxury made my daughter gasp. I knew for a fact that they declared for tax purposes, many of them, a quarter or less of their income. One symbolic fact has stuck in my mind: in that school district I had counted more sable and mink coats during that mild winter than I'll see in the freezing winters of Madison, Wisconsin in a lifetime. On occasions such as I witnessed at the school, Italians rise to Bartolian rhetoric, upright or upended. But it's not "true patriotism" they need; rather, it's a simple understanding of the arithmetic of self-interest.

One must not throw stones from a glass house, I know; and in some respects America is full of glass houses and enough motes in our collective eye to make us hesitant to look for them in our brothers'. . . . But I'll unmix my metaphor enough to say simply that I'm throwing this stone from a very expensive school house with very substantial ceilings in our middle-class district. Choosing it instead of fur coats for most of us was not motivated by self-sacrifice but by self-interest, *bien entendu*.

I came away from Italy horrified by what I felt was a tendency toward social suicide in the middle class itself, a disregard for its own well-being. I should like to see Italians more devoted to themselves.

LOUIS ROSSI

Department of French and Italian
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Madison

Jane Austen

IT IS GRATIFYING to know that Laurence Lerner finds my remarks about the significance of incest in *Mansfield Park* "dazzling" ("A Quiet Driver: On Jane Austen", July). Unfortunately, however, they seem to have blinded him to the sense of what I have to say in the rest of my essay.

After quoting my assertion that Fanny Price "is in the best sense of the word, a *sentimental* heroine" he observes that "this is simply wrong." On the contrary it is, I believe, complexly right. If I were using "sentimental" loosely I should, of course, have to agree with Mr Lerner. But I am attempting to be precise. When I say "the best sense of the word" I mean something specific, something that is suggested in the immediate context in which my assertion occurs and more particularly in the analysis I make of the relationship between Fanny Price and Clarissa Harlowe. Clarissa is a sentimental heroine—but she is not "sentimental" in the vulgar sense and neither is Fanny: they are in fact surprisingly tough-minded girls. They do not indulge "in harmless gushings", nor do they treat "benevolent instincts" and "conscience" as synonymous; and to suggest, as Mr Lerner does, that I equate these terms, or that I "ignore a vast ideological issue, the battle between belief in moral principles and trust in benevolent feelings" is totally to misread my argument. Of course there is a battle—and Clarissa and Fanny are in the centre of it. It is this indeed that makes them such interesting, ambiguous and in a basic sense sentimental figures. Their sentimentalism does not consist in a blind faith in man's innate benevolence, however, but

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in their conscious attempt to strike a morally adequate balance between the claims of conscience and feeling, sense and sensibility.

I find Mr Lerner's censure all the more puzzling because I share what I take to be his view of Jane Austen, namely that in the modern sense of the term she is often an anti-sentimental writer (some reference to my position on this is made in "Jane Austen's Monsters" by Donald Greene, which is also included in John Halperin's *Bicentenary Essays*). I believed, too, perhaps rather innocently, that I belonged to "the minority" he admires "who think Jane Austen actually intended to be critical of Fanny Price." I make the points, for instance, that Fanny is "admirable, but . . . limited" and that "Jane Austen is clearly aware of [her] limitations"; and that Fanny and her world are seen "with a very clear and unsentimental eye."

These arguments are not new—they are as Mr Lerner rightly says, old and fascinating. That they should still be capable of being canvassed so vigorously is testimony, of course, to the vitality of the novels which have inspired them; and I can only agree that a quiet drive with Jane Austen herself will always be more rewarding than any number of quick canters with the critics.

R. F. Brissenden

The Australian National University
Canberra

Mr Brissenden's letter invites us to continue the old fascinating Jane Austen arguments a bit further; and to show why I think he is wrong will, I hope, illuminate a principle or two of literary interpretation.

First, incest. I'm afraid I didn't intend to gratify him when I found his remarks dazzling: I thought them clever but question-begging. He thinks incest plays an "extremely significant" role in *Mansfield Park*: "the alliance between Edmund and Fanny has distinctly incestuous overtones." This is because Edmund is "closely linked" with Fanny's brother William, because after the exposure of Mary Crawford he presses her to his heart and calls her "my only sister—my comfort now", and because Sir Thomas and Mrs Norris, in the first chapter, discuss the "incestuous significance" of one of the sons falling in love with Fanny if she comes to live there.

To this I say: the first point "links" Edmund and William by a psychoanalytic technique of identification quite inappropriate to the waking, rational actions then in question—to help Fanny's brother is not, in any meaningful sense, to become that brother. Second, plenty of heroes in 19th-century fiction (Paul Emmanuel, David Copperfield) and—I have little doubt—plenty of 19th-century men in real life called their girl "sister" as a step to calling her wife. I don't deny the psychological interest of this, and I'm sure it's connected with sexual evasiveness, but it's a gross over-simplification to interpret it by saying that marriage "fulfilled the forbidden incestuous dream" for them; further, it is a point about 19th-century habits of courtship rather than a point about Jane Austen. Similarly for the last point: the discussion between Sir Thomas and Mrs Norris demands a context of what the attitudes were to marriage between cousins, or between adopted and natural children: the fact that they can discuss the problem so openly shows that for them there is nothing like a taboo involved. The relation between Fanny and Edmund grows under our eyes, and is nothing like the presumed incest of Tom Jones with his "mother", to which Mr Brissenden compares it, which involves the accidental committing of a horrifying deed. It is as great a difference as that between Agnes' love for David Copperfield and Oedipus' intercourse with his mother.

On the question of sentimentality Mr Brissenden doesn't run things together so wildly, but I'm still not convinced by his defence. I can't recapitulate here the Butler-Devlin argument about the difference between Shaftesbury's morality of sentiment and Dr Johnson's morality of principle (which I found very convincing), except to say that the Shaftesburian position is represented by Marianne Dashwood, who believed that the pleasantness of an occupation is the strongest proof of its propriety, who is certainly a sentimental heroine, and who is contrasted with Elinor in a way similar to the contrast between the Crawfords and Fanny. I am sure Mr Brissenden knows more about all this than I do, and it is clearly this issue he refers to when he says "of course there is a battle—and Clarissa and Fanny are in the centre of it." But if he sees them as struggling to "strike a morally adequate balance" in the conflict between principle and sentiment, is it not fudging the issue to attach to them a label that equates them with one side of it?

I fear that both his letter and his original article do a bit of this fudging: he protests indignantly that he does not equate "conscience" and "benevolent attitudes", but I have turned up the original sentence, and I find they are used as parallel terms, in contrast to what society allows, with no hint of any difference between them. Mr Devlin's very illuminating point in the history of morals somehow disappears in the indecisiveness of Mr Brissenden's prose.

Laurence Lerner

Hove
Sussex

Rump

Your September issue's "Life & Letters Today", has an item on the Anatomy of Politics citing the bewilderment of the *Daily Telegraph* on the subject of "rumps" and "bottoms." But the definition of "rump" in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 6th ed., includes, of course, "(2) Small or contemptible remnant of a parliament or similar body."

I happen to believe in coalition, but let's get our political language right.

Marcia Andrews

Loggia Gallery
London

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Life & Letters Today

London

MR. LEVIN'S HEART: Mr. Bernard Levin's prose is usually so sensitive and precise that it is distressing to find him disfiguring his column with a crude Americanism [Beverley Nichols writes].

In his moving account of the tortures of Vladimir Bukovsky he tells us that apart from his other agonies Bukovsky is suffering from "a heart condition." What is this supposed to mean? The word "condition" is a neutral substantive carrying no implication whatsoever until it is qualified by an adjective. If you have a heart you have, *ipso facto*, a "heart condition." It may be good, bad, or indifferent, but it is still a "heart condition", and so it will be until you die. Mr. Levin's heart, obviously, is warm and strong and in the right place. But on this occasion perhaps it missed a beat. THE TIMES

London

QUESTION AND ANSWER: *Do the British really need to bother with foreign languages?*

There is [Professor George Steiner writes] a tremendous superficial justification for the British linguistic laziness. At some point, English culture decided that Dagos, Frogs, Krauts, Wogs and others had to learn English but that no Englishman should put himself to such monstrous effort. DAILY MAIL

Paris

MALAPHORS: The Foreign Office in London has never forgotten the impact which Ernest Bevin had on its cultured Oxbridge syntax [Don Cook writes].

As Foreign Secretary in the first postwar Labour government, Bevin may indeed have invented the malaphor form. On one occasion when a Foreign Office recommendation was laid before him for approval, he growled:

"I ain't 'avin' it. If you open up that Pandora's box you'll find a lot of Trojan 'orses inside."

Another time he denounced his Russian opposite, Molotov, with the immortal line: "The ink was scarcely dry on the words out of me mouth when he tore the 'ole thing up."

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

Bedford

ZAP! POW! *Denis the Menace, Minnie the Minx, Spiderman, The Hulk and other popular comic characters have been recruited by a librarian to interest children in books.*

Mr David Taylor, children's librarian at Bedford, has stocked the town's Central Library with 2,500 comics which can be borrowed in the same way as books. He hopes they will entice more children into the library and lead to their borrowing and reading its books.

His scheme, thought to be the first of its kind in the country, has won the approval of the National Library Association, and educationalists, who are concerned about the rate of illiteracy among children.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Princeton

BORN AGAIN: *The conference I attended here [Max Lerner writes], that of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, is making considerable headway in numbers and influence.*

Everything was represented—body-mind, Gestalt, dance and art therapy, consciousness raising, Zen, sexuality, parenthood, feminism, psychosynthesis, chanting, meditation approaches to the dwelling place, Sufi, astrology, the uses of pain and greed, biological clocks, sensory awareness, life-cycle phases, shamanism, fantasy, telepathy, energy flow, postural integration, psychokinesis, psychic healing, bioenergetics, couples and family therapy, psycho-drama, sex therapy and transactional analysis.

There are some 300 men and women presenting their psychological wares to the audience. Their vocabulary had a deadly sameness to it—not a technical vocabulary but a jargon nonetheless, using familiar words in a special context: Liberate, touch, explore, feel, fulfill, experiential, dimensions, awareness, integration, wholeness, self-actualizing, relating, sharing, creative, counter-connectedness, dynamics, energy, transcendence, search, being, becoming, renewal, transformation, inner space, inner time, even inner tennis and jogging.

The bookstalls are filled with self-help kits in the form of awareness books, assertiveness books, meditation books, Zen books, Yoga Books and Est books. There is a pretty profit in them and in the seminars and workshops they come out of, but also a serious intent of the American spirit to perfect itself.

"Others may help you to peak experiences, but only I can teach you to transform yourself." It is the "born again" theme reborn, the New Time Religion catching up with the Old Time Religion.

NEW YORK POST

London

MY KINGDOM FOR A DEMO: For Richard III fans, incensed at Shakespeare's version of their idol, yesterday was the summer of their discontent. To support their claim that Richard did not murder the princes in the Tower, they planned a mock trial and demo outside the ancient pile.

Only four people turned up. So the Richard III Society called the whole thing off and just handed out leaflets.

SUNDAY TIMES

London

LESBOS: *In the review [writes Professor Norman Cohn] of Ms Jane Rule's* Lesbian Images, *Ms Jill Johnston is quoted as maintaining that "until all women are lesbians there will be no true political revolution." Surely this is a rather half-hearted approach? I have long held that if only everyone, of both sexes, were homosexual, all human problems would be solved in less than a century.*

TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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